MARVEL
THE UNCANNY
X-MEN
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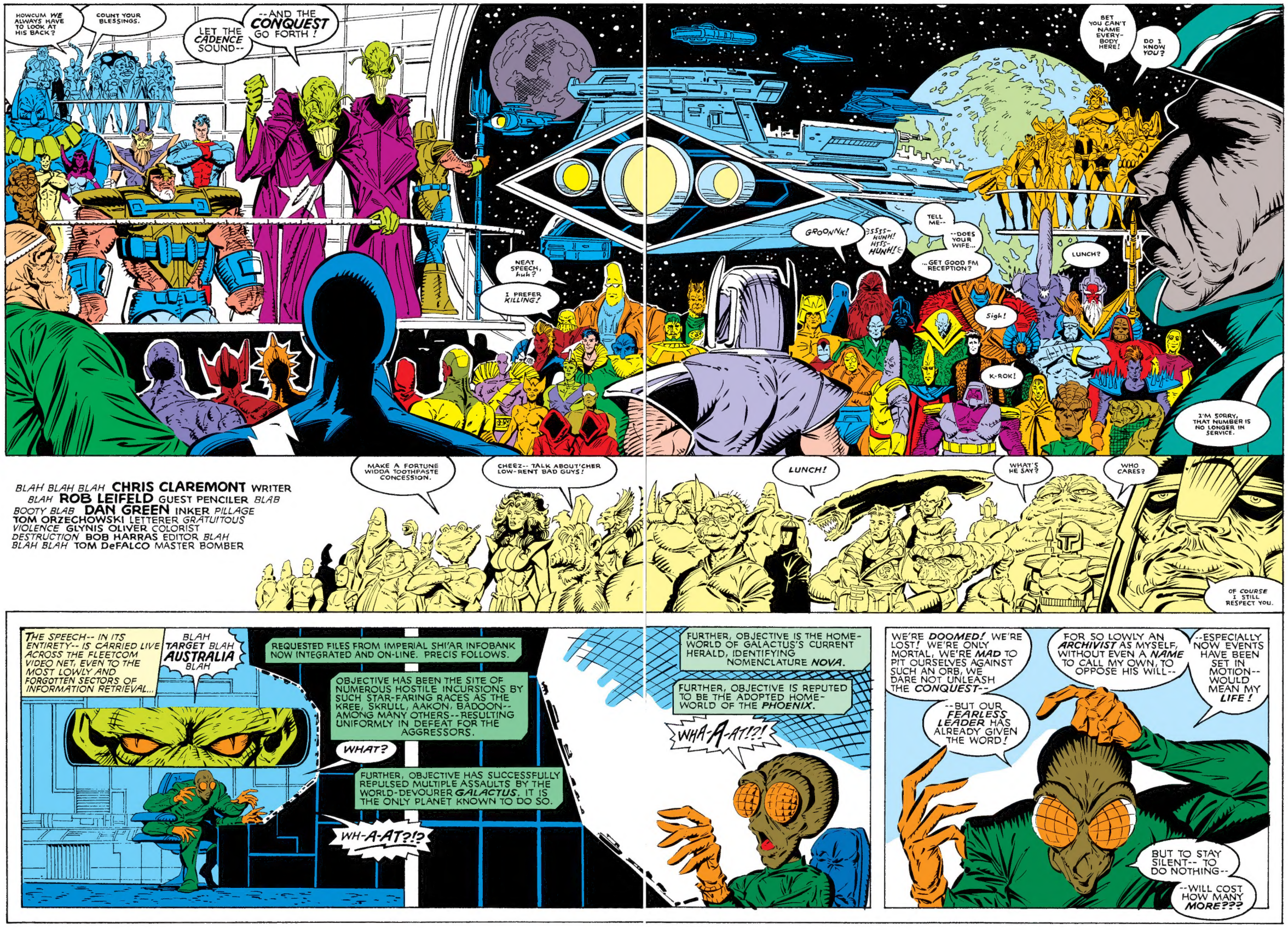
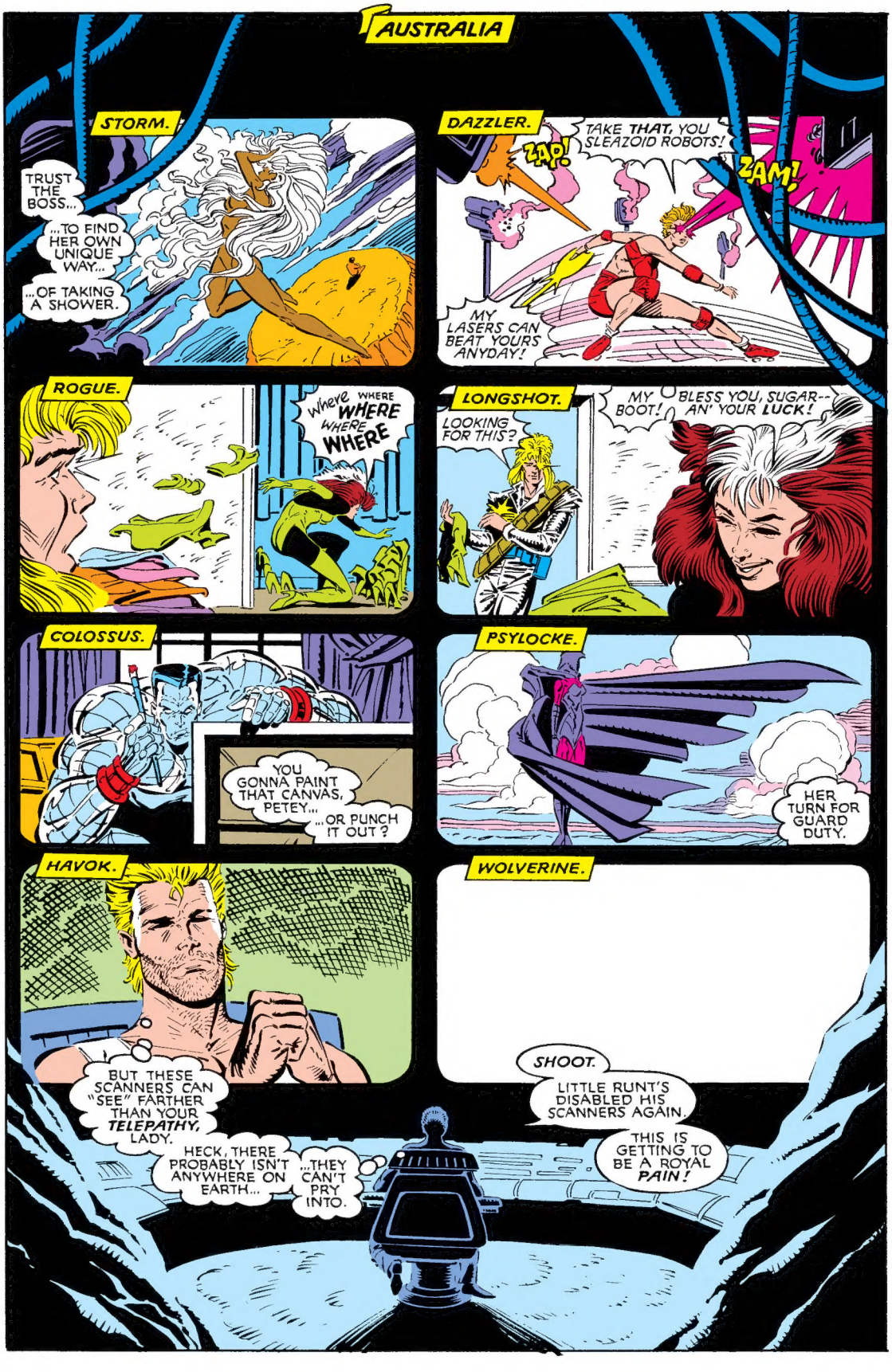
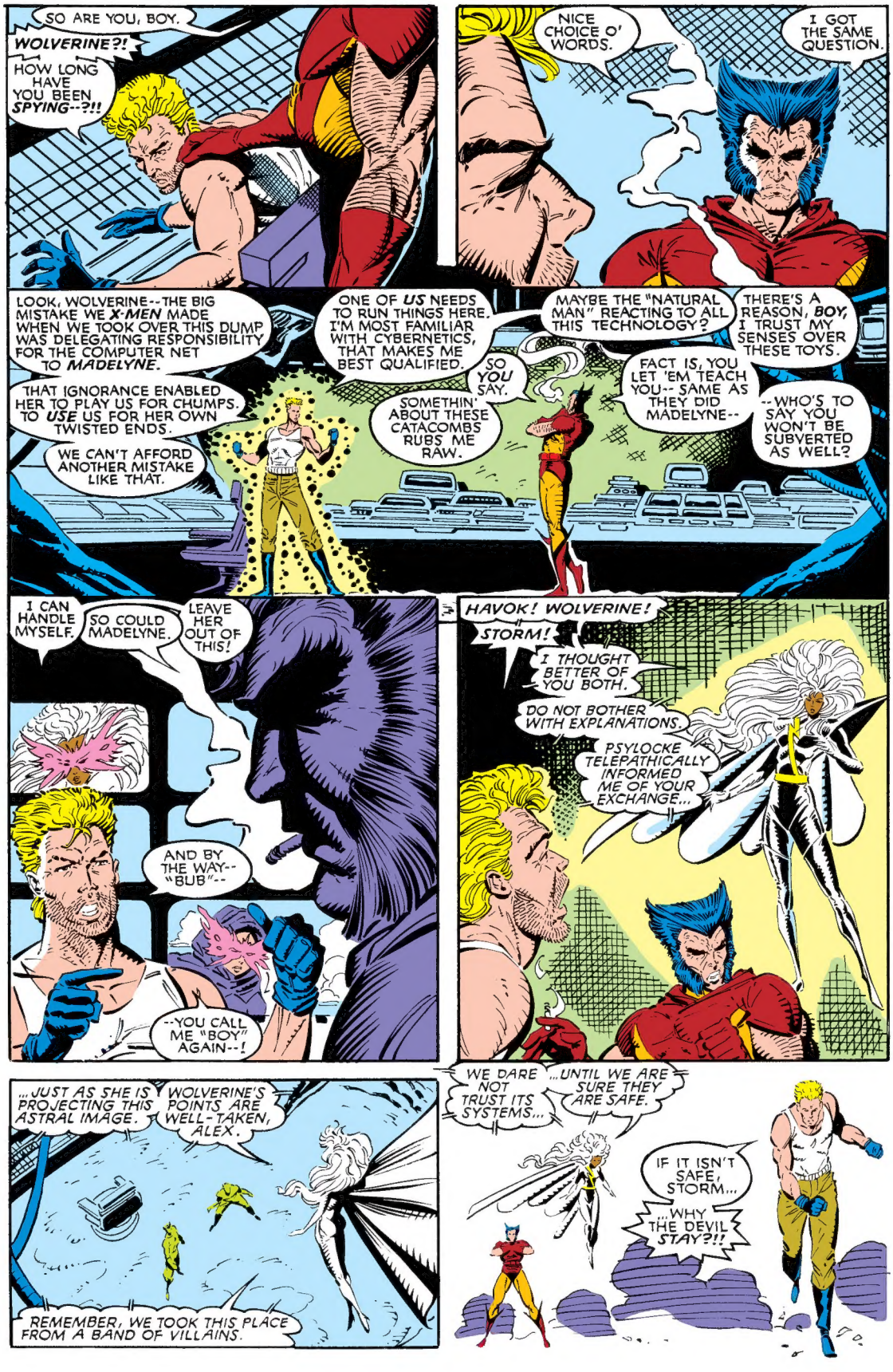
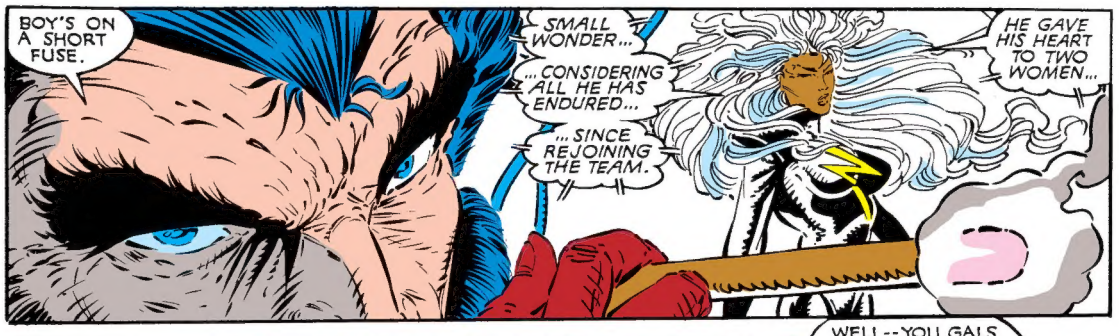
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE
AUTHORITY
ULP! WE'RE SURROUNDED BY HOSTILE ALIENS!
BE A SHAME IF SOMETHING BAD HAPPENS TO MY NICE, NEW JACKET!

THE UNCANNY X-MEN ™ **Vol. 1, No. 245, June, 1989.** (ISSN 0274-5372) Published by MARVEL COMICS, James E. Galton, President. Stan Lee, Publisher. Michael Hobson, Group Vice-President. Milton Schiffman, Vice-President, Production. OFFICE OF PUBLICATION: 387 PARK AVENUE SOUTH, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10016. **SECOND CLASS POSTAGE PAID AT NEW YORK, NY AND AT ADDITIONAL MAILING OFFICES.** Published monthly except fortnightly June, July, and August. Copyright © 1989 by Marvel Entertainment Group, Inc. All rights reserved. Price $1.00 per copy in the U.S. and $1.25 in Canada. Subscription rate $12.00 for 12 issues. Canada and foreign, $15.00. Printed in the U.S.A. No similarity between any of the names, characters, persons, and or institutions in this magazine with those of any living or dead person or institution is intended, and any such similarity which may exist is purely coincidental. This periodical may not be sold except by authorized dealers and is sold subject to the conditions that it shall not be sold or distributed with any part of its cover or markings removed, nor in a mutilated condition. THE UNCANNY X-MEN (including all prominent characters featured in the issue), and the distinctive likenesses thereof, are trademarks of the MARVEL ENTERTAINMENT GROUP, INC. **POSTMASTER: SEND ADDRESS CHANGES TO SUBSCRIPTION DEPARTMENT, 387 PARK AVENUE SOUTH, 9TH FLOOR, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10016.**


HOWCUM WE ALWAYS HAVE TO LOOK AT HIS BACK?
COUNT YOUR BLESSINGS.
LET THE CADENCE SOUND--
--AND THE CONQUEST GO FORTH!
NEAT SPEECH, huh?
I PREFER KILLING!
GROONNK!
SSSS-HUNH! HSS-HUNH!
TELL ME--
--DOES YOUR WIFE...
...GET GOOD FM RECEPTION?
Sigh!
K-ROK!
LUNCH?
BET YOU CAN'T NAME EVERYBODY HERE!
DO I KNOW YOU?
I'M SORRY, THAT NUMBER IS NO LONGER IN SERVICE.
MAKE A FORTUNE WIDDA TOOTHPASTE CONCESSION.
CHEEZ-- TALK ABOUT'CHER LOW-RENT BAD GUYS!
BLAH BLAH BLAH CHRIS CLAREMONT WRITER
BLAH ROB LEIFELD GUEST PENCILER BLAB
BOOTY BLAB DAN GREEN INKER PILLAGE
TOM ORZECHOWSKI LETTERER GRATUITOUS
VIOLENCE GLYNIS OLIVER COLORIST
DESTRUCTION BOB HARRAS EDITOR BLAH
BLAH BLAH TOM DeFALCO MASTER BOMBER
LUNCH!
WHAT'S HE SAY?
WHO CARES?
OF COURSE I STILL RESPECT YOU.
THE SPEECH-- IN ITS ENTIRETY-- IS CARRIED LIVE ACROSS THE FLEETCOM VIDEO NET, EVEN TO THE MOST LOWLY AND FORGOTTEN SECTORS OF INFORMATION RETRIEVAL...
BLAH TARGET BLAH AUSTRALIA BLAH
REQUESTED FILES FROM IMPERIAL SHI'AR INFOBANK NOW INTEGRATED AND ON-LINE. PRECIS FOLLOWS.
OBJECTIVE HAS BEEN THE SITE OF NUMEROUS HOSTILE INCURSIONS BY SUCH STAR-FARING RACES AS THE KREE, SKRULL, AAKON, BADOON-- AMONG MANY OTHERS--RESULTING UNIFORMLY IN DEFEAT FOR THE AGGRESSORS.
WHAT?
FURTHER, OBJECTIVE HAS SUCCESSFULLY REPULSED MULTIPLE ASSAULTS BY THE WORLD-DEVOURER GALACTUS. IT IS THE ONLY PLANET KNOWN TO DO SO.
WH-A-AT?!?
FURTHER, OBJECTIVE IS THE HOME-WORLD OF GALACTUS'S CURRENT HERALD, IDENTIFYING NOMENCLATURE NOVA.
FURTHER, OBJECTIVE IS REPUTED TO BE THE ADOPTED HOME-WORLD OF THE PHOENIX.
WHA-A-AT!?!
WE'RE DOOMED! WE'RE LOST! WE'RE ONLY MORTAL, WE'RE MAD TO PIT OURSELVES AGAINST SUCH AN ORB, WE DARE NOT UNLEASH THE CONQUEST--
--BUT OUR FEARLESS LEADER HAS ALREADY GIVEN THE WORD!
FOR SO LOWLY AN ARCHIVIST AS MYSELF, WITHOUT EVEN A NAME TO CALL MY OWN, TO OPPOSE HIS WILL--
--ESPECIALLY NOW EVENTS HAVE BEEN SET IN MOTION-- WOULD MEAN MY LIFE!
BUT TO STAY SILENT-- TO DO NOTHING--
--WILL COST HOW MANY MORE???

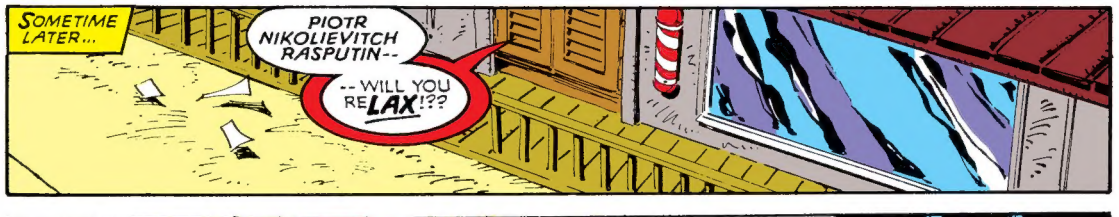

AUSTRALIA
STORM.
TRUST THE BOSS...
...TO FIND HER OWN UNIQUE WAY...
...OF TAKING A SHOWER.
DAZZLER.
TAKE THAT, YOU SLEAZOID ROBOTS!
ZAP!
ZAM!
MY LASERS CAN BEAT YOURS ANYDAY!
ROGUE.
Where WHERE WHERE WHERE WHERE
LONGSHOT.
LOOKING FOR THIS?
MY BOOT!
BLESS YOU, SUGAR-- AN' YOUR LUCK!
COLOSSUS.
YOU GONNA PAINT THAT CANVAS, PETEY...
...OR PUNCH IT OUT?
PSYLOCKE.
HER TURN FOR GUARD DUTY.
HAVOK.
BUT THESE SCANNERS CAN "SEE" FARTHER THAN YOUR TELEPATHY, LADY.
HECK, THERE PROBABLY ISN'T ANYWHERE ON EARTH...
...THEY CAN'T PRY INTO.
WOLVERINE.
SHOOT.
LITTLE RUNT'S DISABLED HIS SCANNERS AGAIN.
THIS IS GETTING TO BE A ROYAL PAIN!

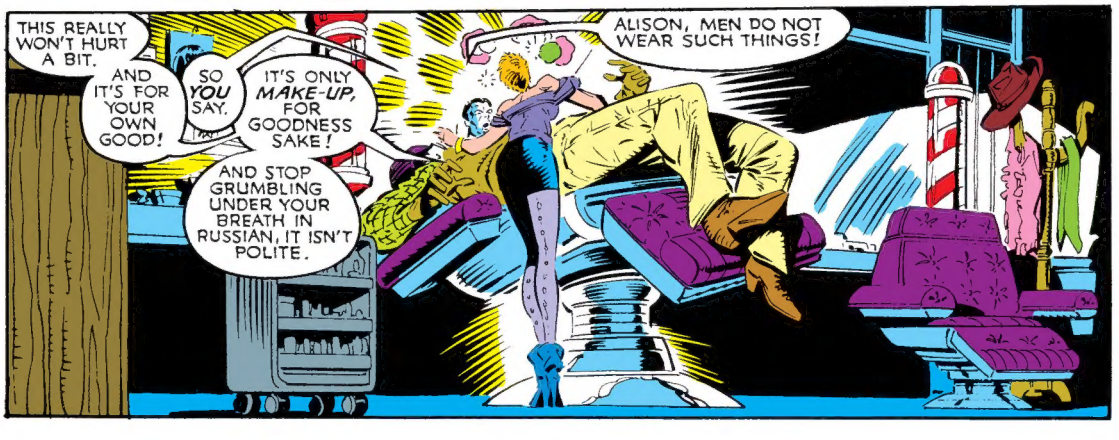

SO ARE YOU, BOY.
WOLVERINE?!
HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN SPYING--?!!
NICE CHOICE O' WORDS.
I GOT THE SAME QUESTION.
LOOK, WOLVERINE--THE BIG MISTAKE WE X-MEN MADE WHEN WE TOOK OVER THIS DUMP WAS DELEGATING RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE COMPUTER NET TO MADELYNE.
THAT IGNORANCE ENABLED HER TO PLAY US FOR CHUMPS. TO USE US FOR HER OWN TWISTED ENDS.
WE CAN'T AFFORD ANOTHER MISTAKE LIKE THAT.
ONE OF US NEEDS TO RUN THINGS HERE. I'M MOST FAMILIAR WITH CYBERNETICS, THAT MAKES ME BEST QUALIFIED.
SO YOU SAY.
SOMETHIN' ABOUT THESE CATACOMBS RUBS ME RAW.
MAYBE THE "NATURAL MAN" REACTING TO ALL THIS TECHNOLOGY?
THERE'S A REASON, BOY, I TRUST MY SENSES OVER THESE TOYS.
FACT IS, YOU LET 'EM TEACH YOU-- SAME AS THEY DID MADELYNE--
--WHO'S TO SAY YOU WON'T BE SUBVERTED AS WELL?
I CAN HANDLE MYSELF.
SO COULD MADELYNE.
LEAVE HER OUT OF THIS!
AND BY THE WAY-- "BUB"--
--YOU CALL ME "BOY" AGAIN--!
HAVOK! WOLVERINE!
STORM!
I THOUGHT BETTER OF YOU BOTH.
DO NOT BOTHER WITH EXPLANATIONS.
PSYLOCKE TELEPATHICALLY INFORMED ME OF YOUR EXCHANGE...
...JUST AS SHE IS PROJECTING THIS ASTRAL IMAGE.
WOLVERINE'S POINTS ARE WELL-TAKEN, ALEX.
REMEMBER, WE TOOK THIS PLACE FROM A BAND OF VILLAINS.
WE DARE NOT TRUST ITS SYSTEMS...
...UNTIL WE ARE SURE THEY ARE SAFE.
IF IT ISN'T SAFE, STORM...
...WHY THE DEVIL STAY?!!

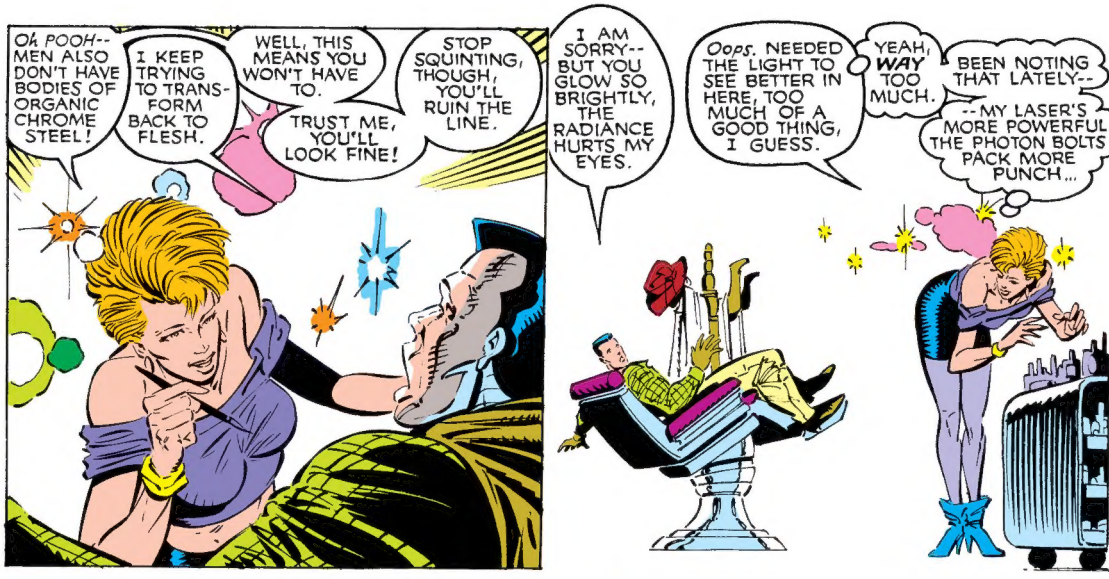

BOY'S ON A SHORT FUSE.
SMALL WONDER...
...CONSIDERING ALL HE HAS ENDURED...
...SINCE REJOINING THE TEAM.
HE GAVE HIS HEART TO TWO WOMEN...

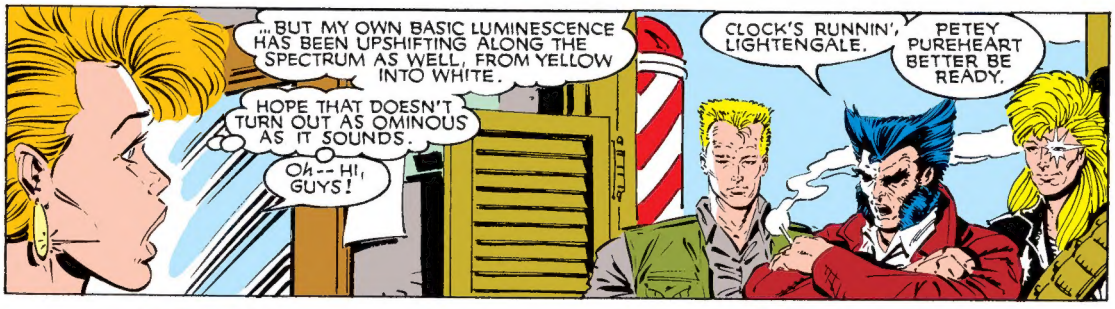
...ONLY TO SEE THEM BOTH DESTROYED.
HE WAS HELPLESS TO SAVE THEM...
...YET HE BLAMES HIMSELF NONETHELESS.
YOU DO NOT HELP MATTERS, MY FRIEND, WITH YOUR FREQUENT ABSENCES.
MY TIME, ORORO. MY LIFE. MY BUSINESS.

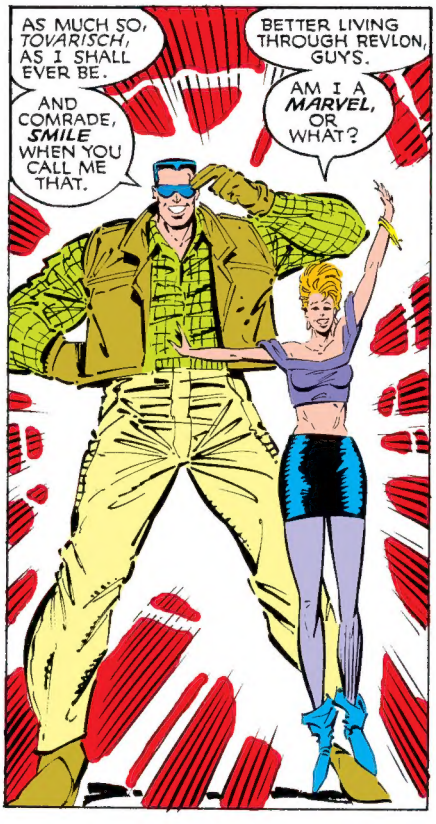
I'M HERE WHEN YOU NEED ME.
BUT WHAT OF THE DAY WHEN YOU ARE NOT?
I'M NOT THE PROBLEM HERE, DARLIN', IT'S THE YOUNGSTERS.
ANY SUGGESTIONS, THEN...
...ABOUT HOW WE MIGHT RESOLVE IT?
WELL--YOU GALS HAD YOURSELVES A FINE OLD TIME ON YOUR OWN IN LA-LA LAND, JUST THE CURE YOU FIGURED FOR CABIN FEVER.
WHAT'S GOOD FOR THE GOOSE, DARLIN'...


SOMETIME LATER...
PIOTR NIKOLIEVITCH RASPUTIN--
-- WILL YOU RELAX!??


THIS REALLY WON'T HURT A BIT.
AND IT'S FOR YOUR OWN GOOD!
SO YOU SAY.
IT'S ONLY MAKE-UP, FOR GOODNESS SAKE!
AND STOP GRUMBLING UNDER YOUR BREATH IN RUSSIAN, IT ISN'T POLITE.
ALISON, MEN DO NOT WEAR SUCH THINGS!

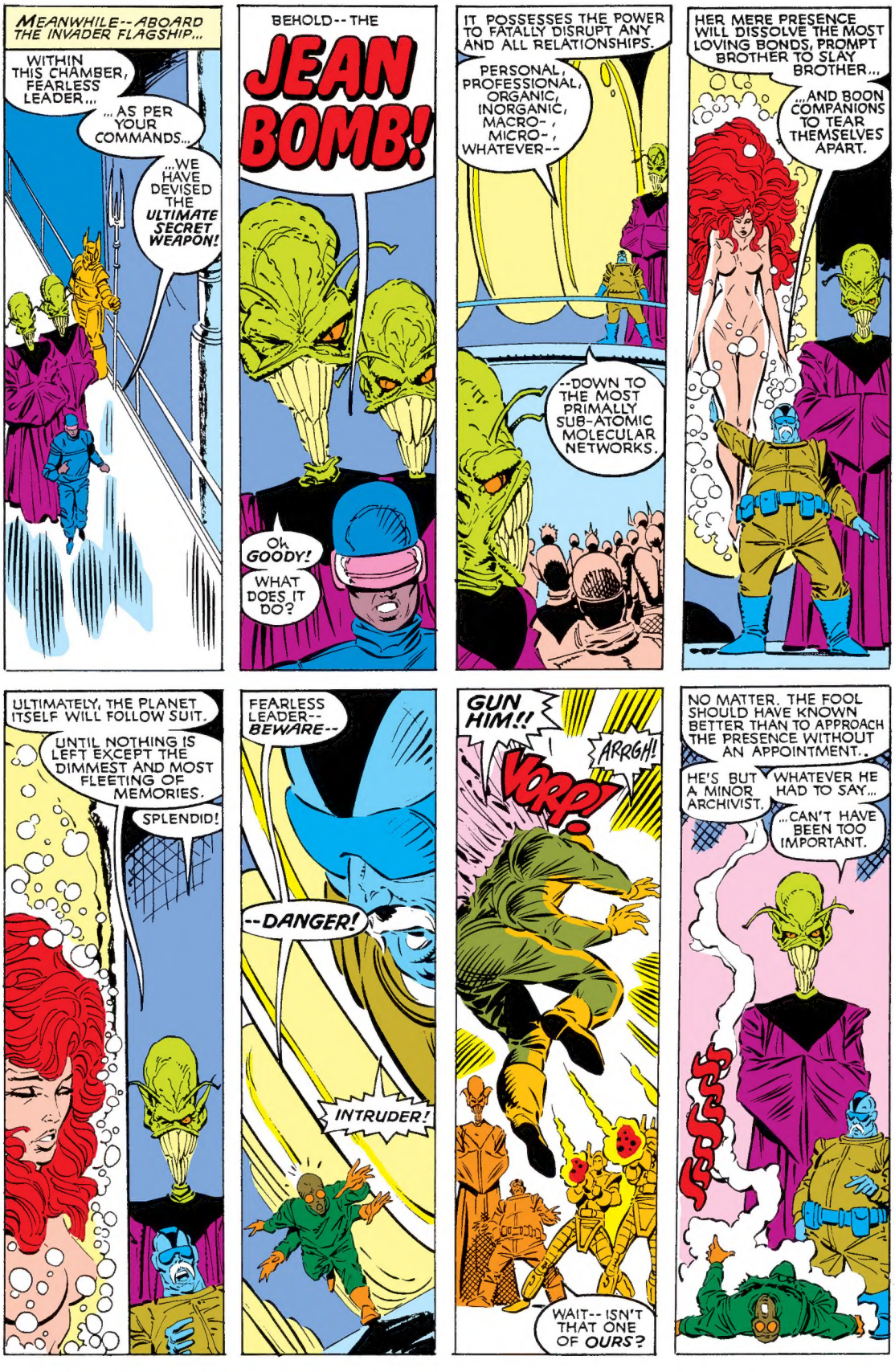

Oh POOH-- MEN ALSO DON'T HAVE BODIES OF ORGANIC CHROME STEEL!
I KEEP TRYING TO TRANS-FORM BACK TO FLESH.
WELL, THIS MEANS YOU WON'T HAVE TO.
TRUST ME, YOU'LL LOOK FINE!
STOP SQUINTING, THOUGH, YOU'LL RUIN THE LINE.
I AM SORRY-- BUT YOU GLOW SO BRIGHTLY, THE RADIANCE HURTS MY EYES.
Oops. NEEDED THE LIGHT TO SEE BETTER IN HERE, TOO MUCH OF A GOOD THING, I GUESS.
YEAH, WAY TOO MUCH.
BEEN NOTING THAT LATELY--
--MY LASER'S MORE POWERFUL, THE PHOTON BOLTS PACK MORE PUNCH...

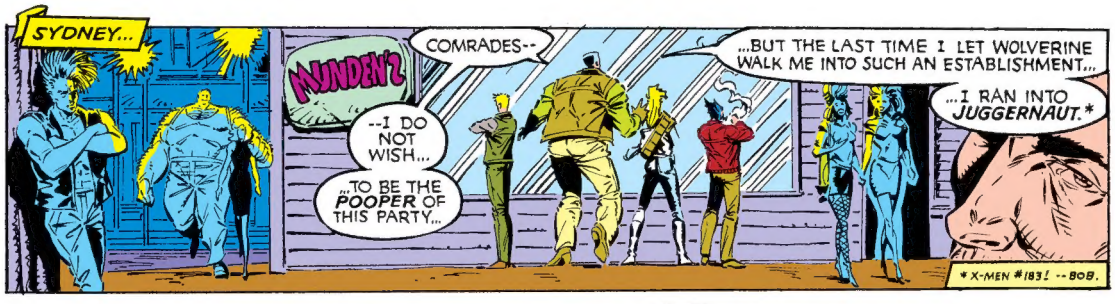

...BUT MY OWN BASIC LUMINESCENCE HAS BEEN UPSHIFTING ALONG THE SPECTRUM AS WELL, FROM YELLOW INTO WHITE.
HOPE THAT DOESN'T TURN OUT AS OMINOUS AS IT SOUNDS.
Oh-- HI, GUYS!
CLOCK'S RUNNIN', LIGHTENGALE.
PETEY PUREHEART BETTER BE READY.


AS MUCH SO, TOVARISCH, AS I SHALL EVER BE.
AND COMRADE, SMILE WHEN YOU CALL ME THAT.
BETTER LIVING THROUGH REVLON, GUYS.
AM I A MARVEL, OR WHAT?

ON THE ESCARPMENT OVERLOOKING THEIR HOME, THE TEAM'S ABORIGINAL COMPANION GATE-WAY OPENS HIS TELEPORTAL...
Y'ALL BEHAVE, HEAR?

TRUST US, LADIES. WE'LL BE FINE.
NO NEED TO WAIT UP, EITHER.
WE'LL BE BACK WHEN WE'RE BACK.
WONDER HOW MUCH THEY'LL LEAVE STANDIN' BEHIND THEM?
ROGUE...
YEAH, BOSS?
...I WISH YOU HAD NOT ASKED.


MEANWHILE--ABOARD THE INVADER FLAGSHIP...
WITHIN THIS CHAMBER, FEARLESS LEADER...
...AS PER YOUR COMMANDS...
...WE HAVE DEVISED THE ULTIMATE SECRET WEAPON!
BEHOLD--THE
JEAN BOMB!
OH, GOODY!
WHAT DOES IT DO?
IT POSSESSES THE POWER TO FATALLY DISRUPT ANY AND ALL RELATIONSHIPS.
PERSONAL, PROFESSIONAL, ORGANIC, INORGANIC, MACRO-, MICRO-, WHATEVER--
--DOWN TO THE MOST PRIMALLY SUB-ATOMIC MOLECULAR NETWORKS.
HER MERE PRESENCE WILL DISSOLVE THE MOST LOVING BONDS, PROMPT BROTHER TO SLAY BROTHER...
...AND BOON COMPANIONS TO TEAR THEMSELVES APART.
ULTIMATELY, THE PLANET ITSELF WILL FOLLOW SUIT.
UNTIL NOTHING IS LEFT EXCEPT THE DIMMEST AND MOST FLEETING OF MEMORIES.
SPLENDID!
FEARLESS LEADER--BEWARE--
--DANGER!
INTRUDER!
GUN HIM!!
ARRGH!
VORP!
WAIT--ISN'T THAT ONE OF OURS?
NO MATTER. THE FOOL SHOULD HAVE KNOWN BETTER THAN TO APPROACH THE PRESENCE WITHOUT AN APPOINTMENT..
HE'S BUT A MINOR ARCHIVIST.
WHATEVER HE HAD TO SAY...
...CAN'T HAVE BEEN TOO IMPORTANT.
SSSSS



AN' A LOVERLY TIME WAS HAD BY ALL.

EASY FOR YOU TO SAY.

YOU DID NOT HAVE TO FIGHT HIM.

Oh YE OF LITTLE FAITH.

GIMME A BREAK, PETEY, THIS PLACE IS KOSHER AS CAN BE.

ALL WE'RE GONNA DO IS BLOW OFF SOME STEAM...

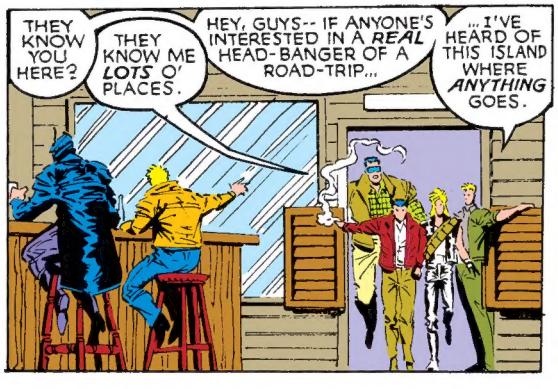
...AN' HAVE US A GOOD TIME.

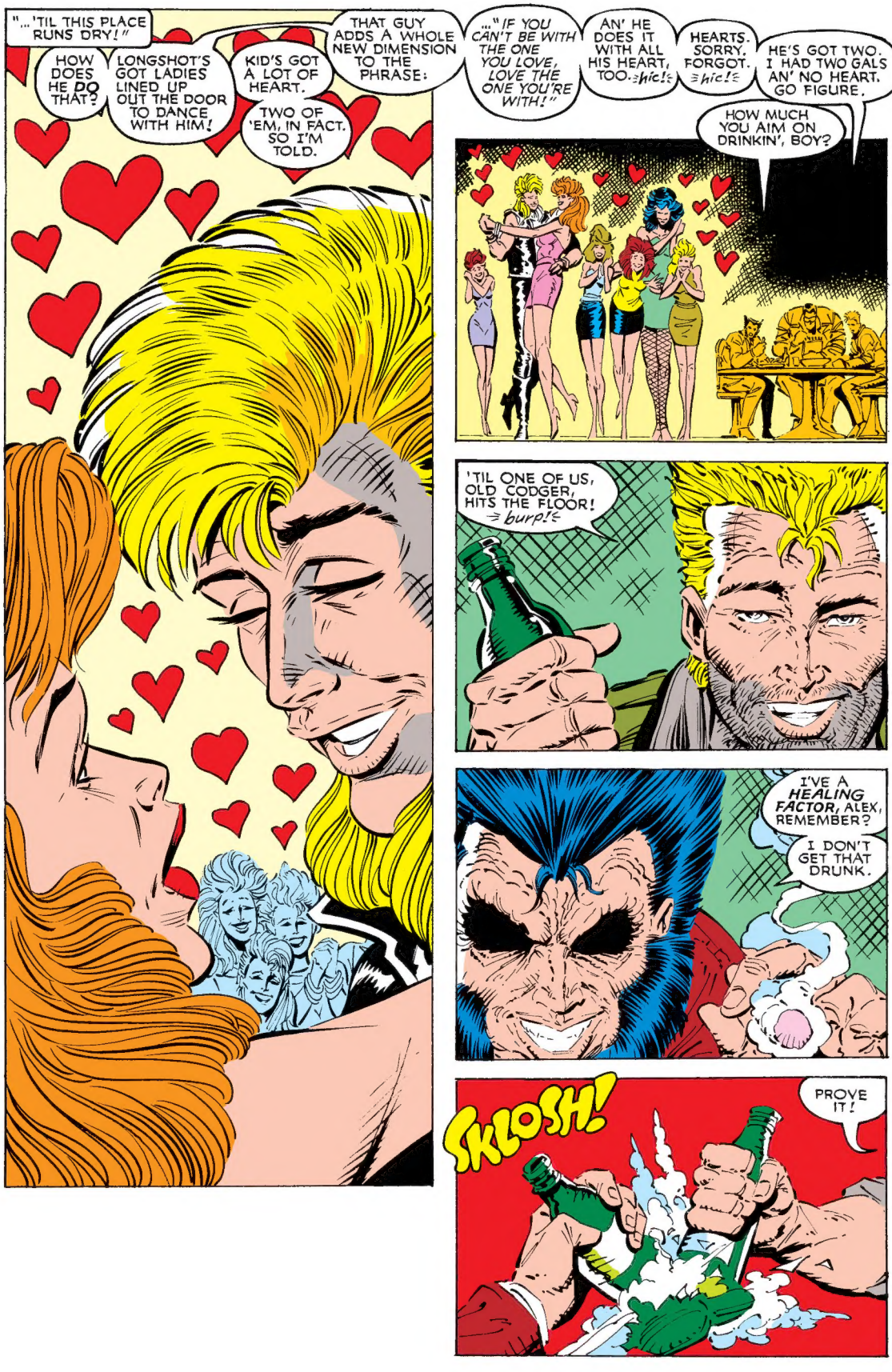
WHERE'S THE HARM IN THAT?

WHEREVER, WE'LL FIND IT.

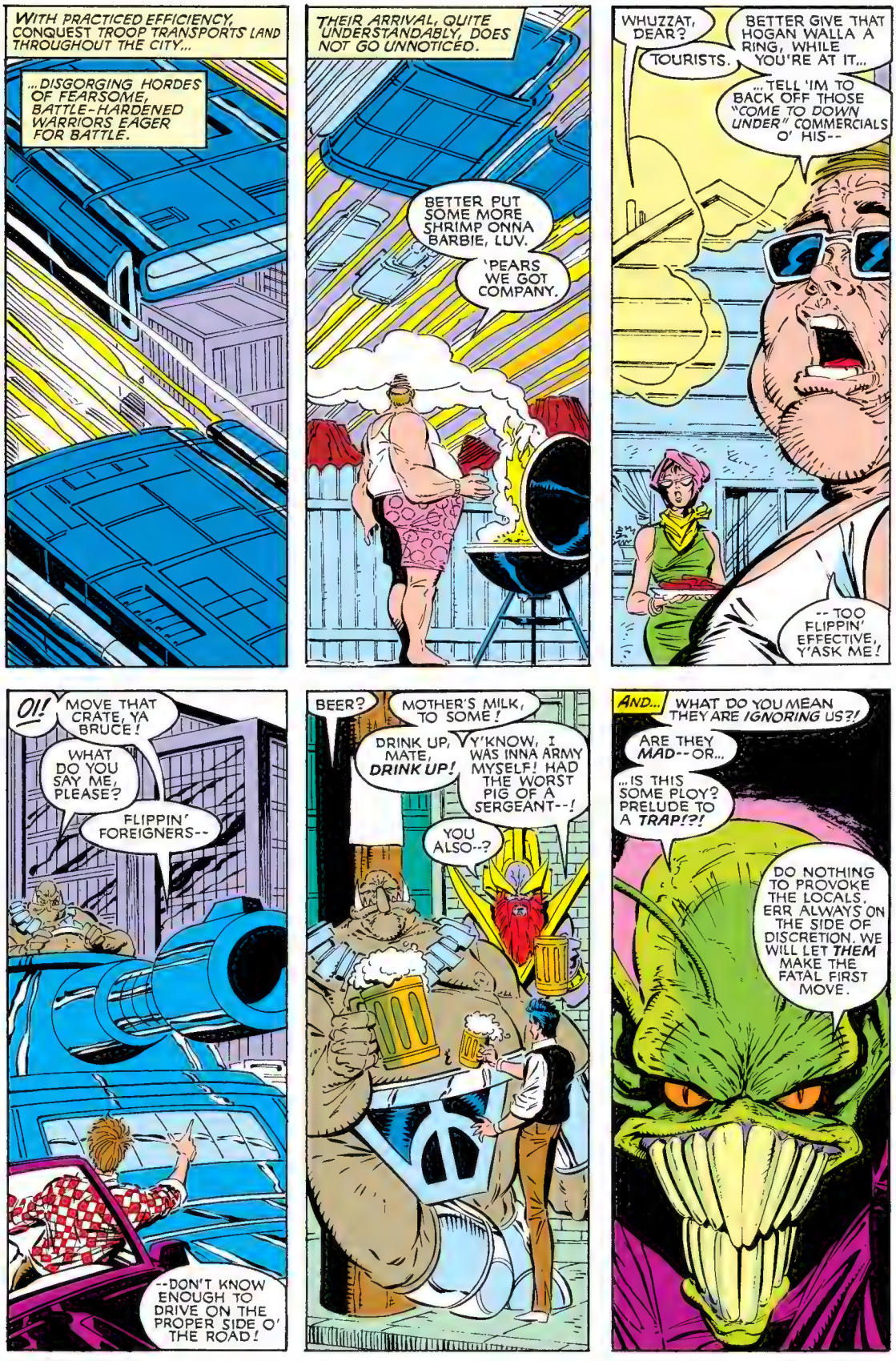
YOU GOT AN ATTITUDE, BUB.

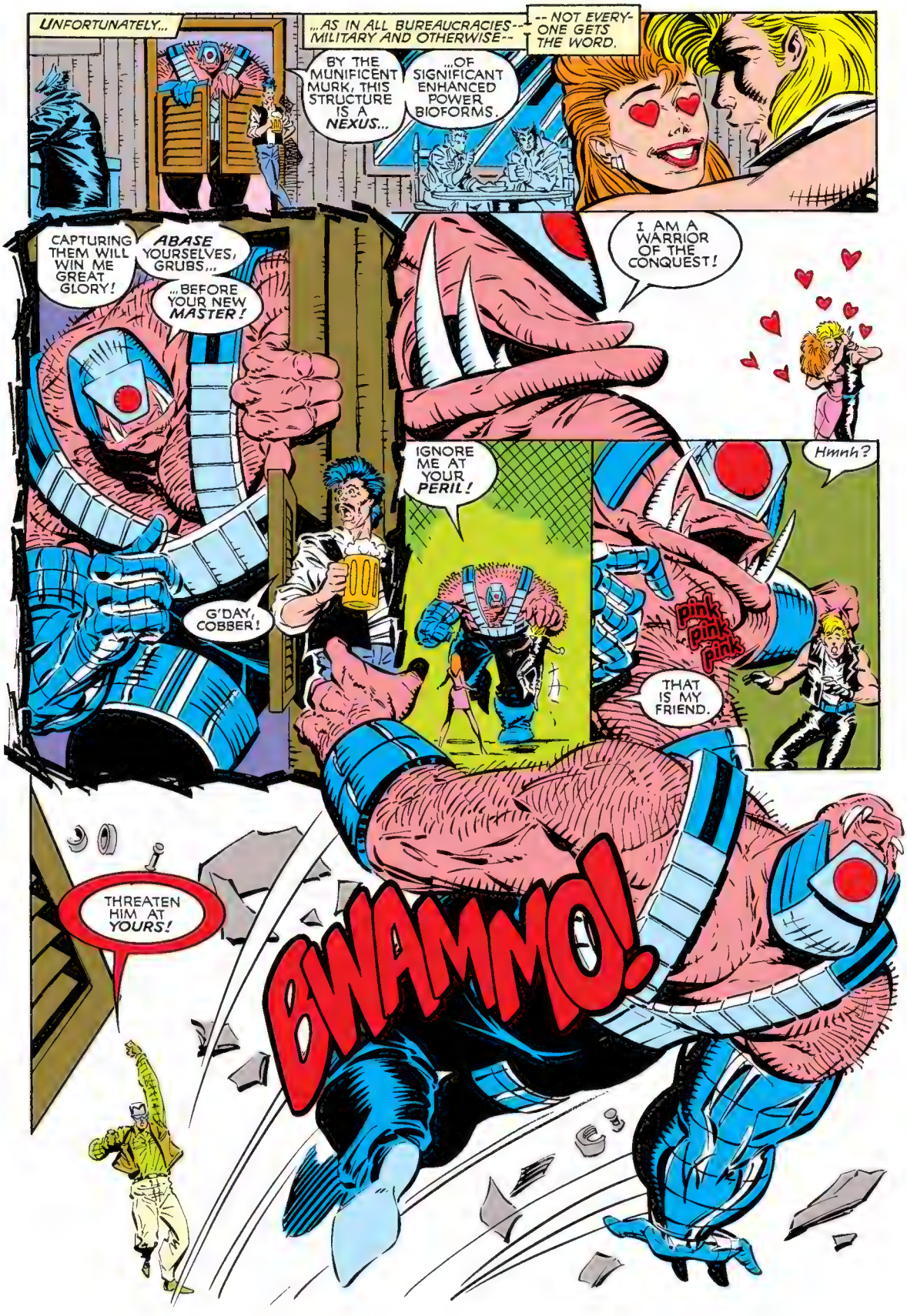
BITTER EXPERIENCE-- CHUM.

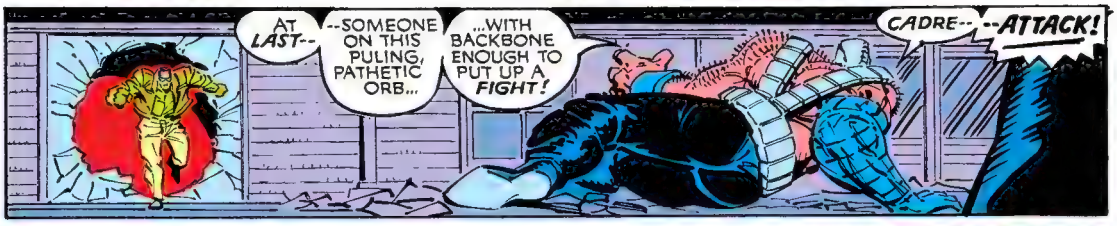



"... 'TIL THIS PLACE RUNS DRY!"
HOW DOES HE DO THAT?
LONGSHOT'S GOT LADIES LINED UP OUT THE DOOR TO DANCE WITH HIM!
KID'S GOT A LOT OF HEART.
TWO OF 'EM, IN FACT. SO I'M TOLD.
THAT GUY ADDS A WHOLE NEW DIMENSION TO THE PHRASE:
..."IF YOU CAN'T BE WITH THE ONE YOU LOVE, LOVE THE ONE YOU'RE WITH!"
AN' HE DOES IT WITH ALL HIS HEART, TOO. ⇒hic!⇐
HEARTS. SORRY. FORGOT. ⇒hic!⇐
HE'S GOT TWO. I HAD TWO GALS AN' NO HEART. GO FIGURE.
HOW MUCH YOU AIM ON DRINKIN', BOY?
'TIL ONE OF US, OLD CODGER, HITS THE FLOOR! ⇒burp!⇐
I'VE A HEALING FACTOR, ALEX, REMEMBER?
I DON'T GET THAT DRUNK.
SKLOSH!
PROVE IT!

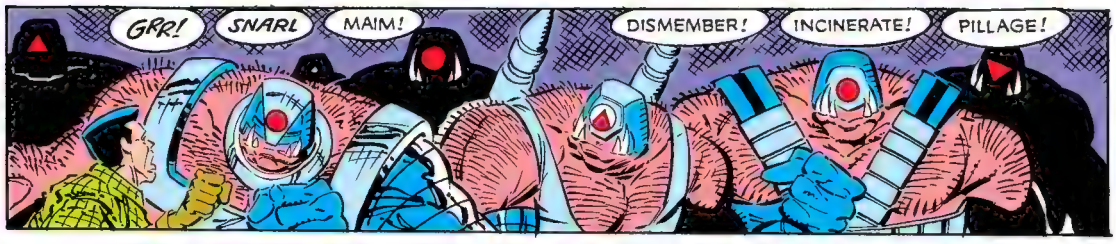
WHAT THE--?!
RUMBLE
EXPLOSION? EARTHQUAKE?!
DOESN'T HAVE THE FEEL.
RUMBLE RUMBLE RUMBLE RUMBLE RUMBLE RUMBLE
RUMBLE RUMBLE
PERHAPS THEN, COMRADES, AN INVASION FROM OUTER SPACE?
RUMBLE RUMBLE RUMBLE
YOU THINK?
IS NOT ANYTHING POSSIBLE--
--ESPECIALLY WHERE WE X-MEN ARE CONCERNED?
SURE WORTH A LOOK-SEE.
RUMBLE RUMBLE RUMBLE RUMBLE
SONOVAGUN!
I THINK I'M GONNA NEED A BIGGER DRINK.


WITH PRACTICED EFFICIENCY, CONQUEST TROOP TRANSPORTS LAND THROUGHOUT THE CITY...
...DISGORGING HORDES OF FEARSOME, BATTLE-HARDENED WARRIORS EAGER FOR BATTLE.
THEIR ARRIVAL, QUITE UNDERSTANDABLY, DOES NOT GO UNNOTICED.
BETTER PUT SOME MORE SHRIMP ONNA BARBIE, LUV.
'PEARS WE GOT COMPANY.
WHUZZAT, DEAR?
TOURISTS.
BETTER GIVE THAT HOGAN WALLA A RING, WHILE YOU'RE AT IT...
...TELL 'IM TO BACK OFF THOSE "COME TO DOWN UNDER" COMMERCIALS O' HIS--
--TOO FLIPPIN' EFFECTIVE, Y'ASK ME!
OI!
MOVE THAT CRATE, YA BRUCE!
WHAT DO YOU SAY ME, PLEASE?
FLIPPIN' FOREIGNERS--
--DON'T KNOW ENOUGH TO DRIVE ON THE PROPER SIDE O' THE ROAD!
BEER?
MOTHER'S MILK, TO SOME!
DRINK UP, MATE, DRINK UP!
Y'KNOW, I WAS INNA ARMY MYSELF! HAD THE WORST PIG OF A SERGEANT--!
YOU ALSO--?
AND...
WHAT DO YOU MEAN THEY ARE IGNORING US?!
ARE THEY MAD--OR...
...IS THIS SOME PLOY? PRELUDE TO A TRAP!?!
DO NOTHING TO PROVOKE THE LOCALS. ERR ALWAYS ON THE SIDE OF DISCRETION. WE WILL LET THEM MAKE THE FATAL FIRST MOVE.

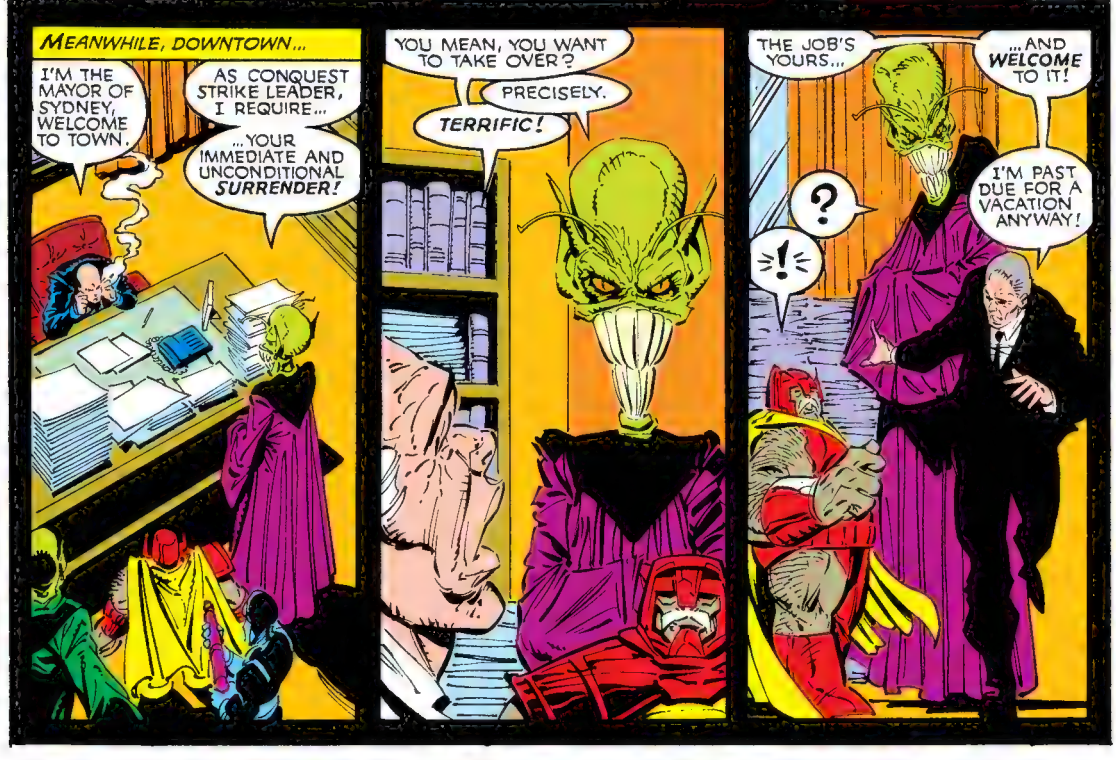

UNFORTUNATELY...
...AS IN ALL BUREAUCRACIES--MILITARY AND OTHERWISE--
-- NOT EVERYONE GETS THE WORD.
BY THE MUNIFICENT MURK, THIS STRUCTURE IS A NEXUS...
...OF SIGNIFICANT ENHANCED POWER BIOFORMS.
CAPTURING THEM WILL WIN ME GREAT GLORY!
ABASE YOURSELVES, GRUBS...
...BEFORE YOUR NEW MASTER!
I AM A WARRIOR OF THE CONQUEST!
IGNORE ME AT YOUR PERIL!
Hmnh?
G'DAY, COBBER!
pink pink pink
THAT IS MY FRIEND.
THREATEN HIM AT YOURS!
BWAMMO!

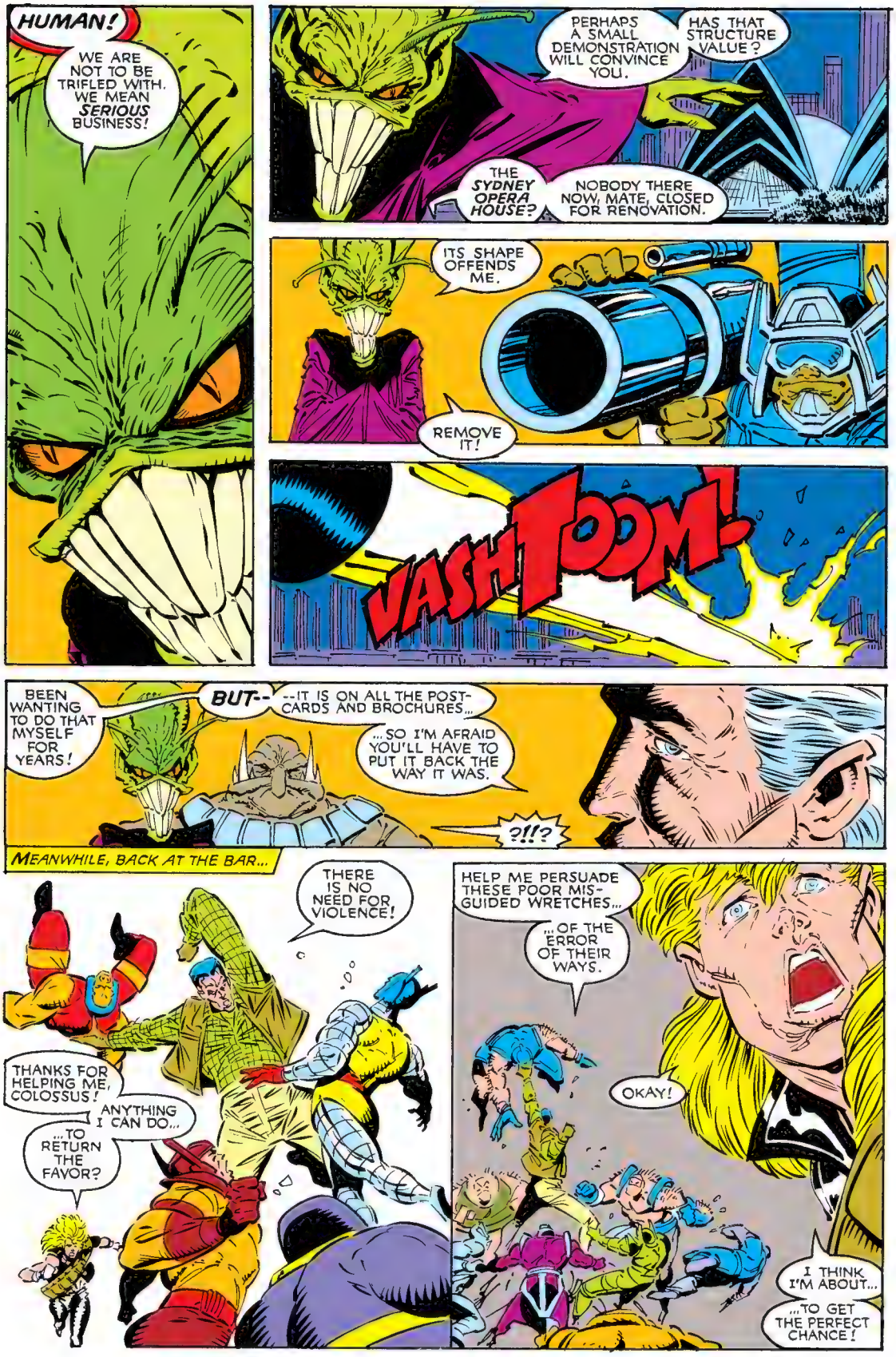

AT LAST--
--SOMEONE ON THIS PULING, PATHETIC ORB...
...WITH BACKBONE ENOUGH TO PUT UP A FIGHT!
CADRE--
--ATTACK!

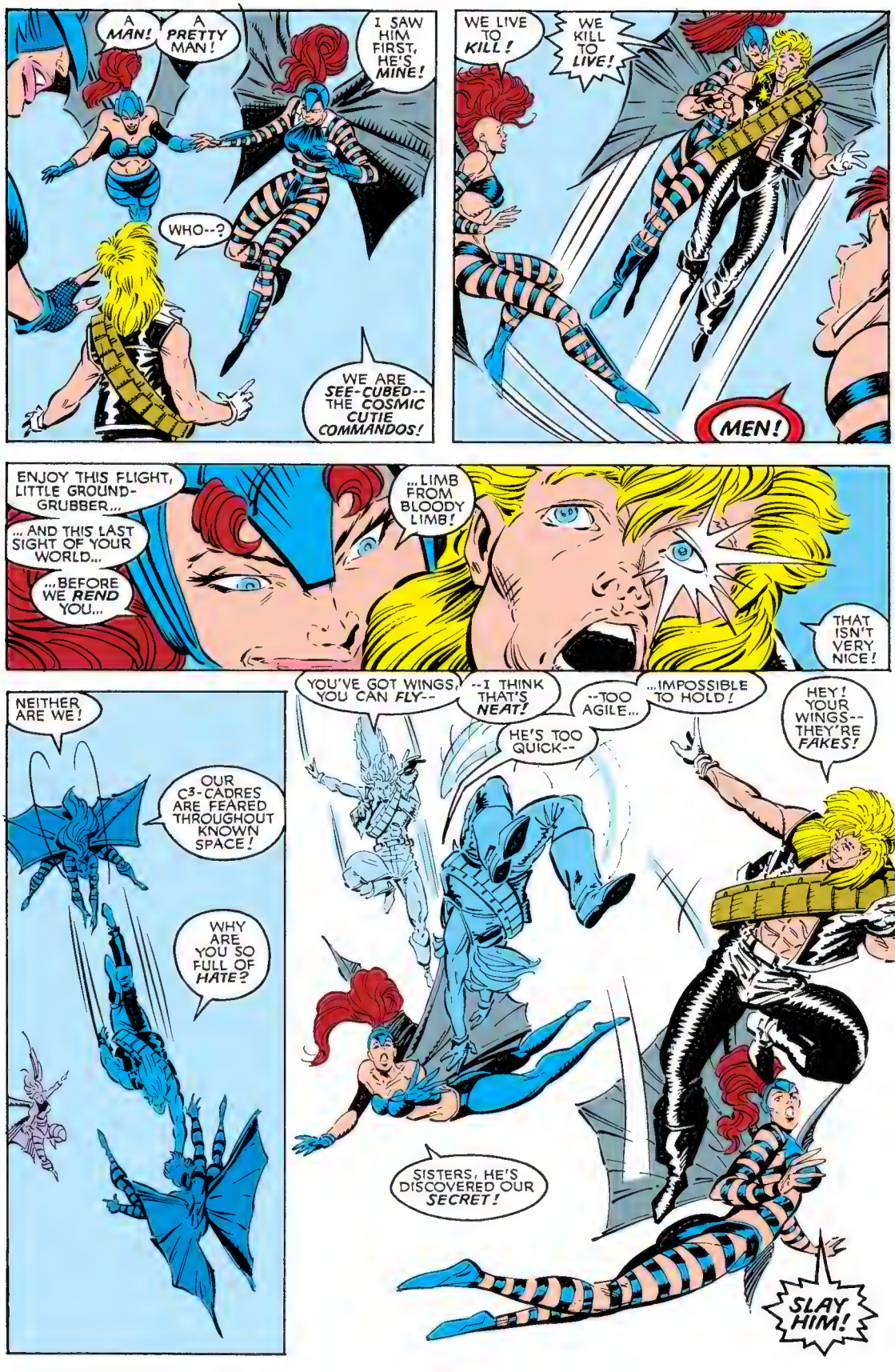
Uh...
...oh!

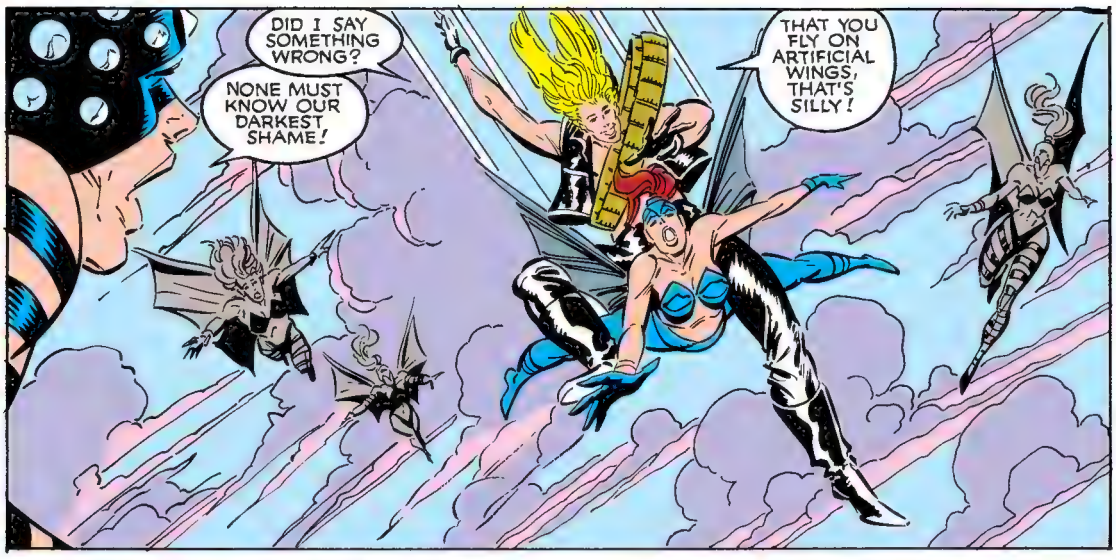

GRR!
SNARL
MAIM!
DISMEMBER!
INCINERATE!
PILLAGE!

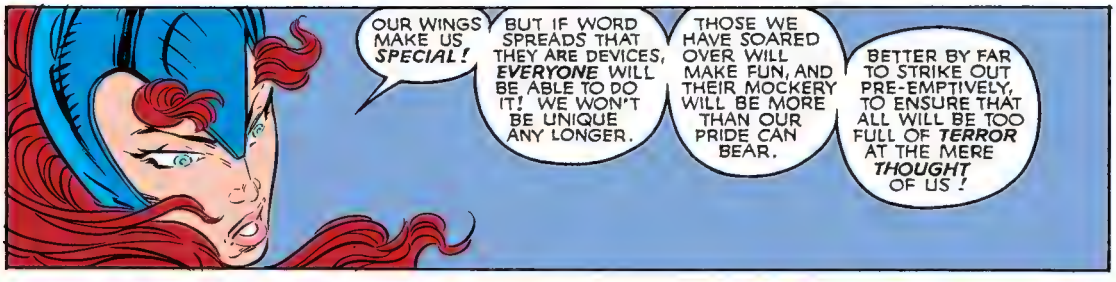
THINK WE SHOULD?
TWENTY TO ONE ODDS?
Nnnahh!


MEANWHILE, DOWNTOWN...
I'M THE MAYOR OF SYDNEY, WELCOME TO TOWN.
AS CONQUEST STRIKE LEADER, I REQUIRE...
...YOUR IMMEDIATE AND UNCONDITIONAL SURRENDER!
YOU MEAN, YOU WANT TO TAKE OVER?
PRECISELY.
TERRIFIC!
THE JOB'S YOURS...
...AND WELCOME TO IT!
?
!
I'M PAST DUE FOR A VACATION ANYWAY!


HUMAN!
WE ARE NOT TO BE TRIFLED WITH. WE MEAN SERIOUS BUSINESS!
PERHAPS A SMALL DEMONSTRATION WILL CONVINCE YOU.
HAS THAT STRUCTURE VALUE?
THE SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE?
NOBODY THERE NOW, MATE, CLOSED FOR RENOVATION.
ITS SHAPE OFFENDS ME.
REMOVE IT!
VASHTOOM!
BEEN WANTING TO DO THAT MYSELF FOR YEARS!
BUT--
--IT IS ON ALL THE POST-CARDS AND BROCHURES...
...SO I'M AFRAID YOU'LL HAVE TO PUT IT BACK THE WAY IT WAS.
?!!?
MEANWHILE, BACK AT THE BAR...
THERE IS NO NEED FOR VIOLENCE!
THANKS FOR HELPING ME, COLOSSUS!
ANYTHING I CAN DO...
...TO RETURN THE FAVOR?
HELP ME PERSUADE THESE POOR MIS-GUIDED WRETCHES...
...OF THE ERROR OF THEIR WAYS.
OKAY!
I THINK I'M ABOUT...
...TO GET THE PERFECT CHANCE!

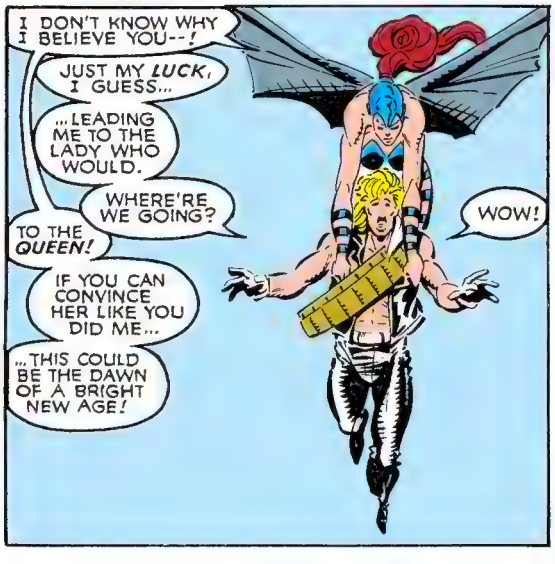

A MAN!
A PRETTY MAN!
I SAW HIM FIRST, HE'S MINE!
WHO--?
WE ARE SEE-CUBED-- THE COSMIC CUTIE COMMANDOS!
WE LIVE TO KILL!
WE KILL TO LIVE!
MEN!
ENJOY THIS FLIGHT, LITTLE GROUND-GRUBBER...
... AND THIS LAST SIGHT OF YOUR WORLD...
...BEFORE WE REND YOU...
...LIMB FROM BLOODY LIMB!
THAT ISN'T VERY NICE!
NEITHER ARE WE!
OUR C3-CADRES ARE FEARED THROUGHOUT KNOWN SPACE!
WHY ARE YOU SO FULL OF HATE?
YOU'VE GOT WINGS, YOU CAN FLY--
--I THINK THAT'S NEAT!
HE'S TOO QUICK--
--TOO AGILE...
...IMPOSSIBLE TO HOLD!
HEY! YOUR WINGS-- THEY'RE FAKES!
SISTERS, HE'S DISCOVERED OUR SECRET!
SLAY HIM!


DID I SAY SOMETHING WRONG?
NONE MUST KNOW OUR DARKEST SHAME!
THAT YOU FLY ON ARTIFICIAL WINGS, THAT'S SILLY!

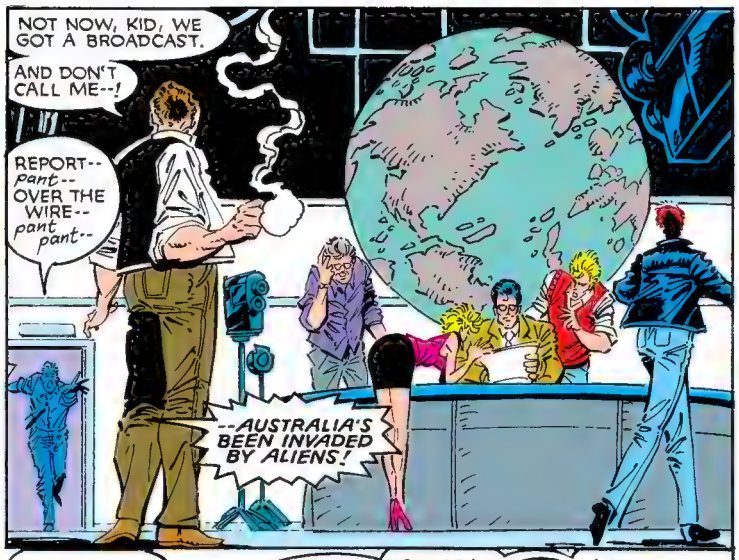

OUR WINGS MAKE US SPECIAL!
BUT IF WORD SPREADS THAT THEY ARE DEVICES, EVERYONE WILL BE ABLE TO DO IT! WE WON'T BE UNIQUE ANY LONGER.
THOSE WE HAVE SOARED OVER WILL MAKE FUN, AND THEIR MOCKERY WILL BE MORE THAN OUR PRIDE CAN BEAR.
BETTER BY FAR TO STRIKE OUT PRE-EMPTIVELY, TO ENSURE THAT ALL WILL BE TOO FULL OF TERROR AT THE MERE THOUGHT OF US!

WHO CARES ABOUT THE MECHANICS--
--YOU CAN FLY!
THE SKY'S SO BIG, WOULD IT REALLY HURT SO MUCH TO SHARE?
SURE, PEOPLE WILL LAUGH--WITH JOY AT BEING PART OF THIS MOST WONDERFUL OF EXPERIENCES!

NO ONE'S EVER TALKED TO US LIKE THAT!
MAYBE YOU JUST NEVER BOTHERED TO LISTEN.
DO YOU MEAN WHAT YOU SAID?!
WHY ELSE WOULD I HAVE SAID THEM?

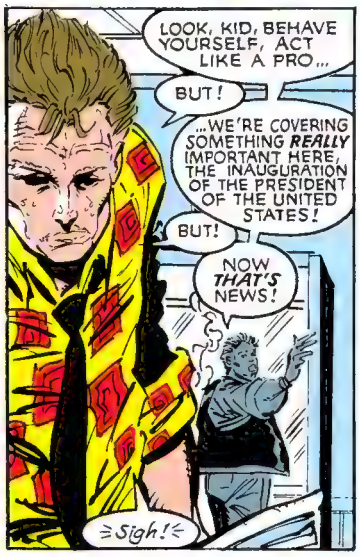

I DON'T KNOW WHY I BELIEVE YOU--!
JUST MY LUCK, I GUESS...
...LEADING ME TO THE LADY WHO WOULD.
WHERE'RE WE GOING?
TO THE QUEEN!
IF YOU CAN CONVINCE HER LIKE YOU DID ME...
...THIS COULD BE THE DAWN OF A BRIGHT NEW AGE!
WOW!

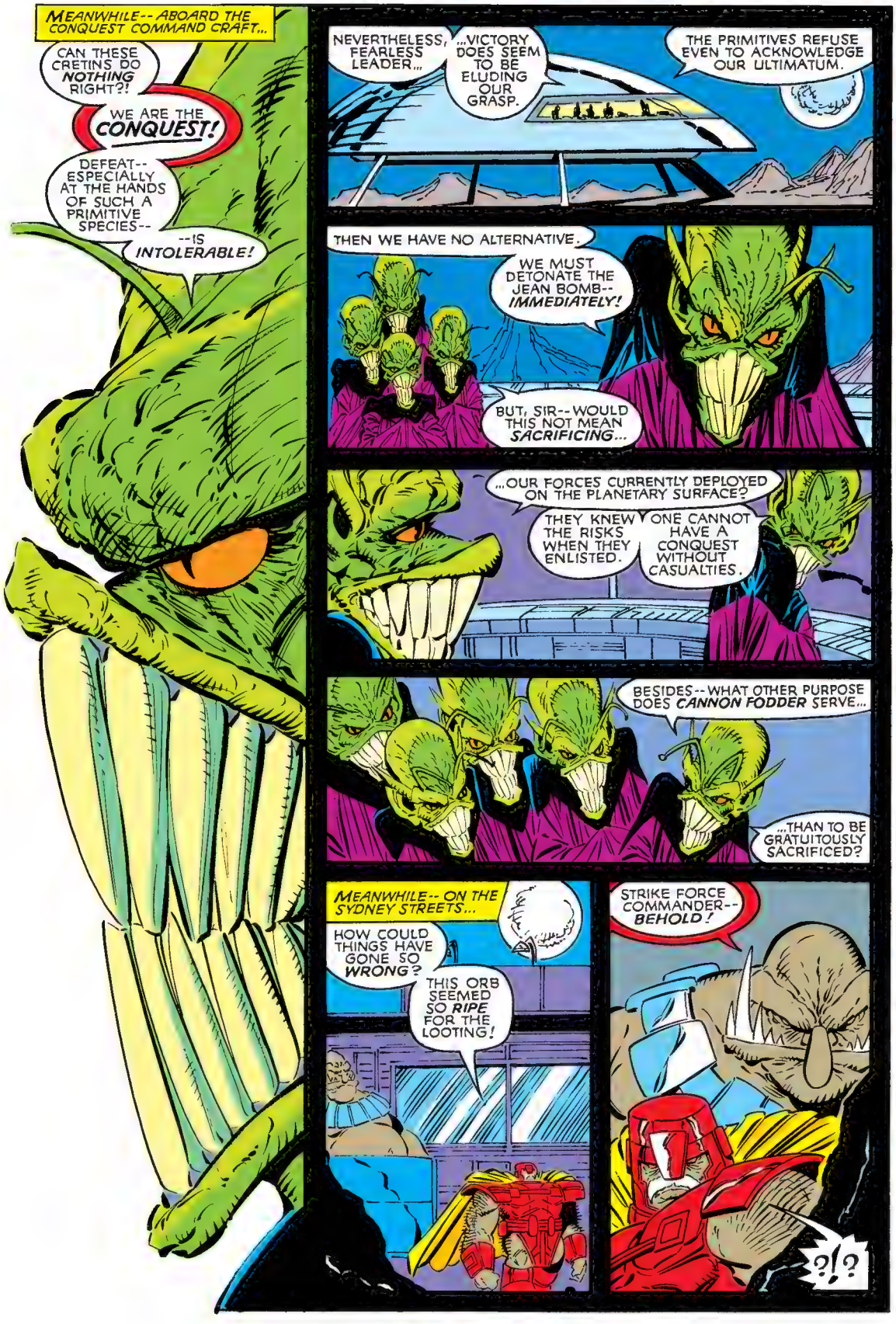
MEANWHILE--
AILY
--HALF A WORLD AWAY...
...IN THE STUDIOS OF A GREAT METROPOLITAN TELEVISION NETWORK...
INAUGURATION DAY
PRESIDENT BUSH
QUAYLE
HOW MANY MILLION DOLLARS?
ODDS ONNA SUPER-BOWL
THERE'S MURPHY BROWN!
CHIEF!
CHIEF!!

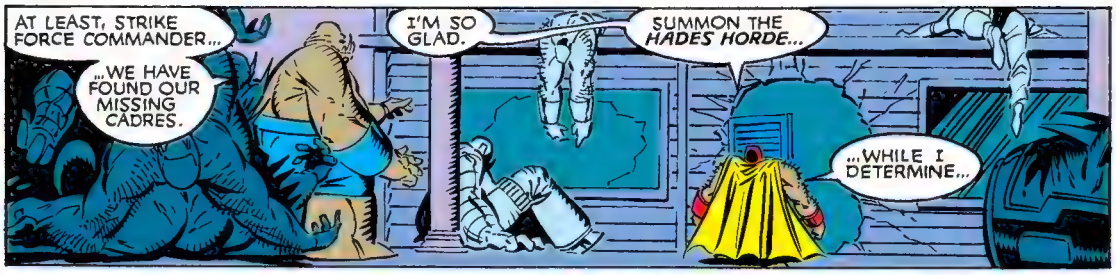

NOT NOW, KID, WE GOT A BROADCAST.
AND DON'T CALL ME--!
REPORT-- pant-- OVER THE WIRE-- pant pant--
--AUSTRALIA'S BEEN INVADED BY ALIENS!

WHAT, MORE TOURISTS?
JAPANESE, I'LL BET.
NO, ALIEN ALIENS! FROM OUTER SPACE!
NOT TODAY, KID, WE'RE BUSY.
IT'S TRUE!
I'M SURE. BUT WE GOT WORK TO DO.
THEY'RE HOLDING THE WHOLE CONTINENT HOSTAGE!
BIG DEAL. PLACE IS MOSTLY DESERT.

THEY SAY IF WE DON'T SURRENDER...
...THEY'LL BLOW UP THE EARTH!
DON'T YOU CARE?!
CHIEF, THIS IS IMPORTANT, THIS IS NEWS!
ONLY TO THE OZZIES, KID.

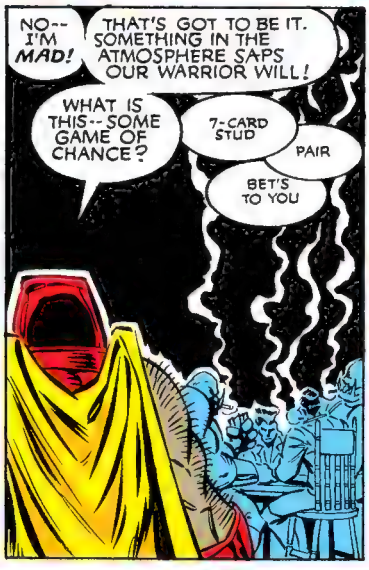

LOOK, KID, BEHAVE YOURSELF, ACT LIKE A PRO...
BUT!
...WE'RE COVERING SOMETHING REALLY IMPORTANT HERE, THE INAUGURATION OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES!
BUT!
NOW THAT'S NEWS!
Sigh!


MEANWHILE-- ABOARD THE CONQUEST COMMAND CRAFT...
CAN THESE CRETINS DO NOTHING RIGHT?!
WE ARE THE CONQUEST!
DEFEAT-- ESPECIALLY AT THE HANDS OF SUCH A PRIMITIVE SPECIES--
--IS INTOLERABLE!
NEVERTHELESS, FEARLESS LEADER...
...VICTORY DOES SEEM TO BE ELUDING OUR GRASP.
THE PRIMITIVES REFUSE EVEN TO ACKNOWLEDGE OUR ULTIMATUM.
THEN WE HAVE NO ALTERNATIVE.
WE MUST DETONATE THE JEAN BOMB-- IMMEDIATELY!
BUT, SIR--WOULD THIS NOT MEAN SACRIFICING...
...OUR FORCES CURRENTLY DEPLOYED ON THE PLANETARY SURFACE?
THEY KNEW THE RISKS WHEN THEY ENLISTED.
ONE CANNOT HAVE A CONQUEST WITHOUT CASUALTIES.
BESIDES--WHAT OTHER PURPOSE DOES CANNON FODDER SERVE...
...THAN TO BE GRATUITOUSLY SACRIFICED?
MEANWHILE-- ON THE SYDNEY STREETS...
HOW COULD THINGS HAVE GONE SO WRONG?
THIS ORB SEEMED SO RIPE FOR THE LOOTING!
STRIKE FORCE COMMANDER-- BEHOLD!
?!?

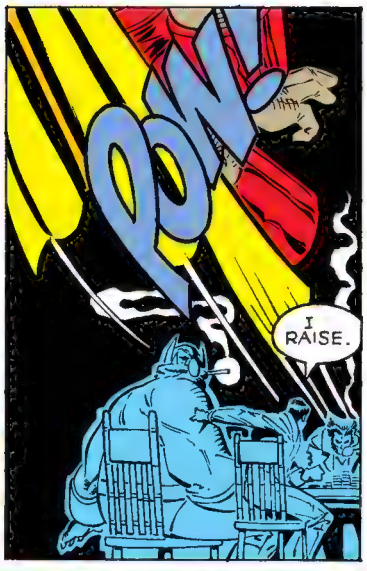

AT LEAST, STRIKE FORCE COMMANDER...
...WE HAVE FOUND OUR MISSING CADRES.
I'M SO GLAD.
SUMMON THE HADES HORDE...
...WHILE I DETERMINE...

...WHO HERE IS TO BE SLAUGHTERED!
WHA-A-AT!?!
THE C3 TYRAX-- UGH-- DANCING WITH A MALE. BUT THEY HATE MEN!

IMPOSSIBLE!
I'M DREAMING!

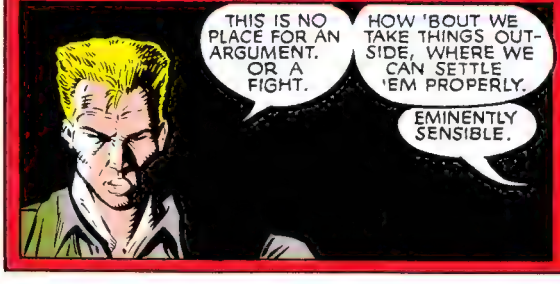

NO-- I'M MAD!
THAT'S GOT TO BE IT. SOMETHING IN THE ATMOSPHERE SAPS OUR WARRIOR WILL!
WHAT IS THIS-- SOME GAME OF CHANCE?
7-CARD STUD
PAIR
BET'S TO YOU

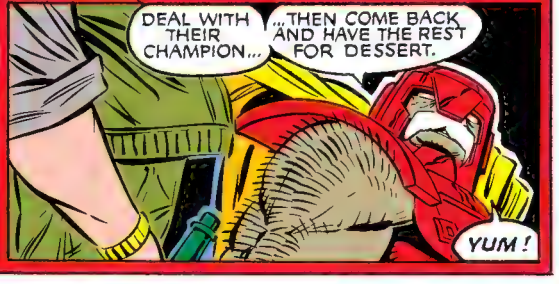
CHECK TO THE RAISER
KING HIGH
#20
TREY TO A FLUSH
SEE
CALL
FOLD
NEXT DEAL
MY LORD AUTARCH, THIS IS THE GROSSEST...
...DERELICTION OF DUTY--!

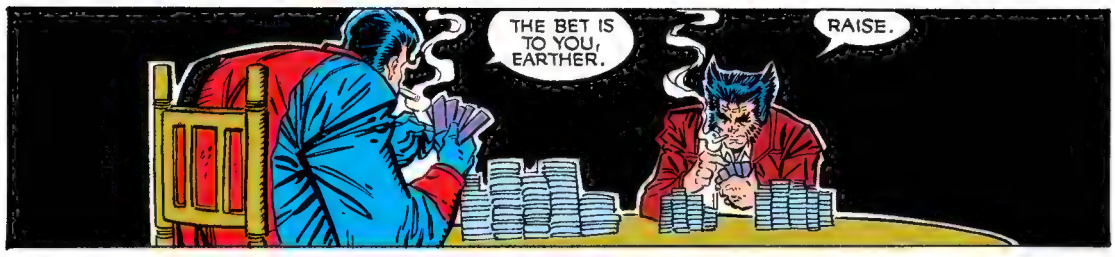

POW!
I RAISE.

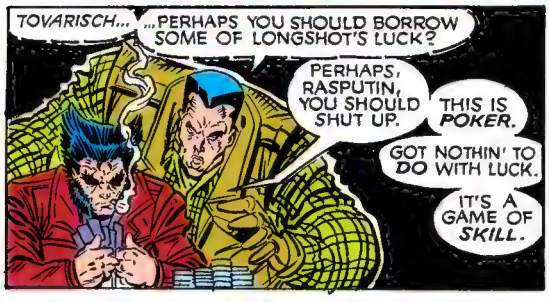
STRIKE FORCE COMMANDER--
--ARE YOU--?!!

FURIOUS?!
HOWEVER DID YOU GUESS?
YO! BRO!!


THIS IS NO PLACE FOR AN ARGUMENT. OR A FIGHT.
HOW 'BOUT WE TAKE THINGS OUT-SIDE, WHERE WE CAN SETTLE 'EM PROPERLY.
EMINENTLY SENSIBLE.

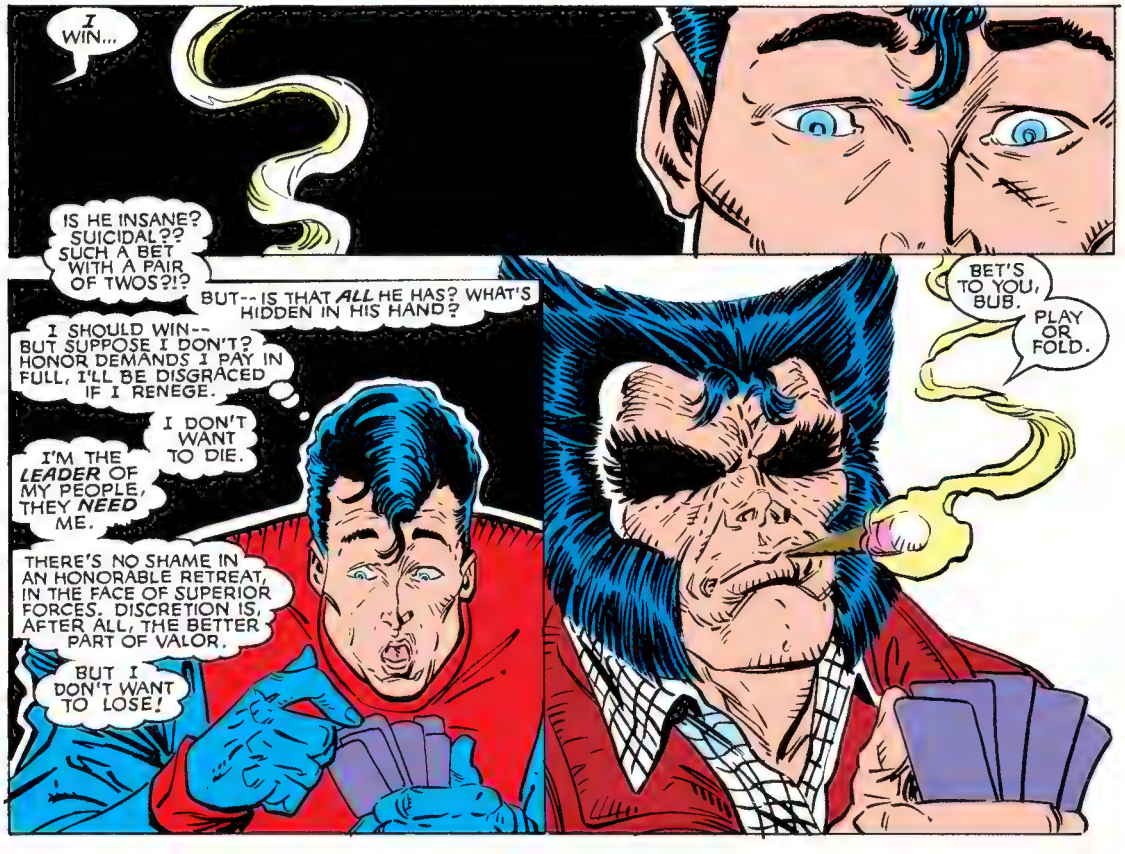

DEAL WITH THEIR CHAMPION...
...THEN COME BACK AND HAVE THE REST FOR DESSERT.
YUM!

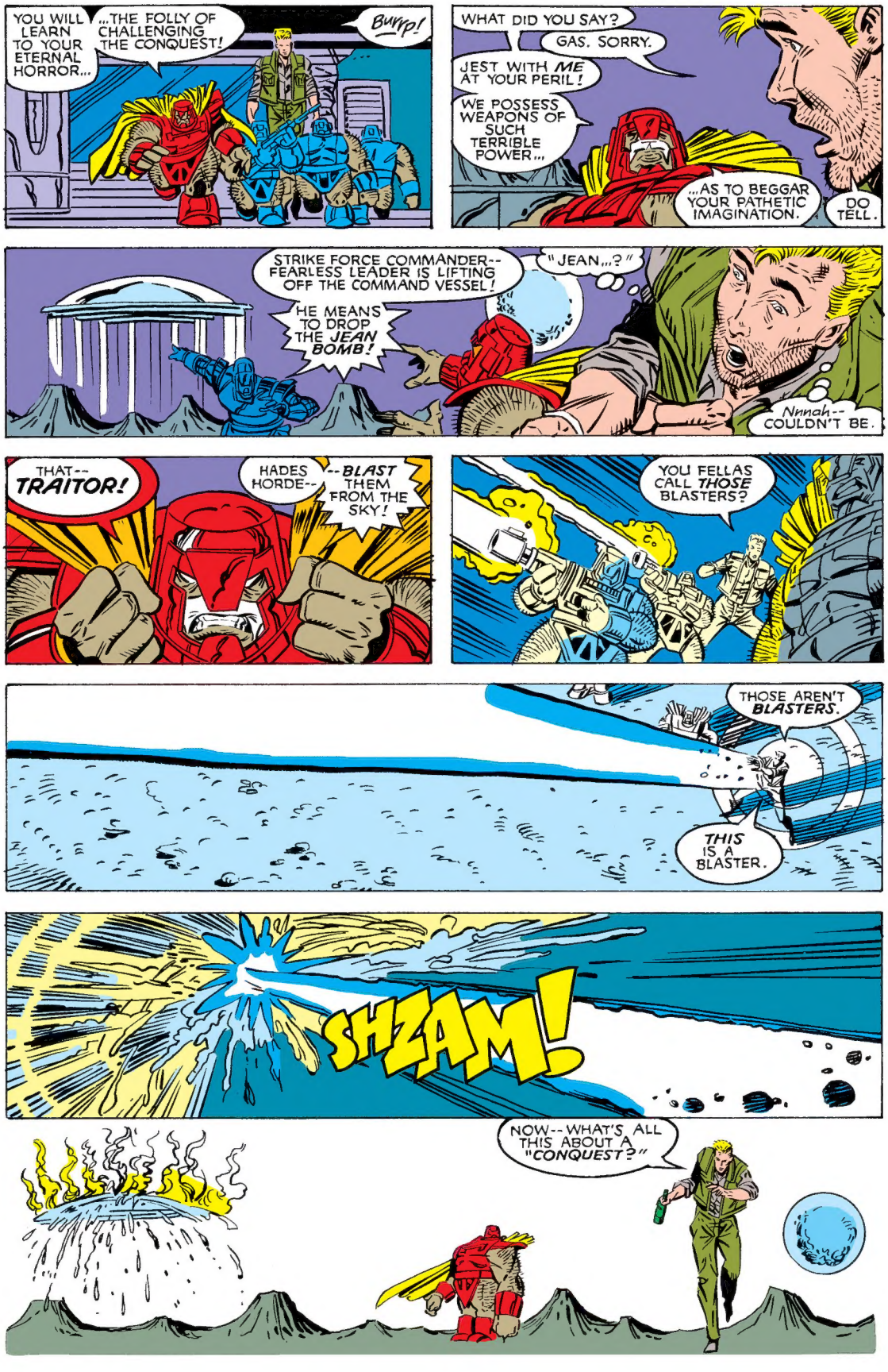

THE BET IS TO YOU, EARTHER.
RAISE.

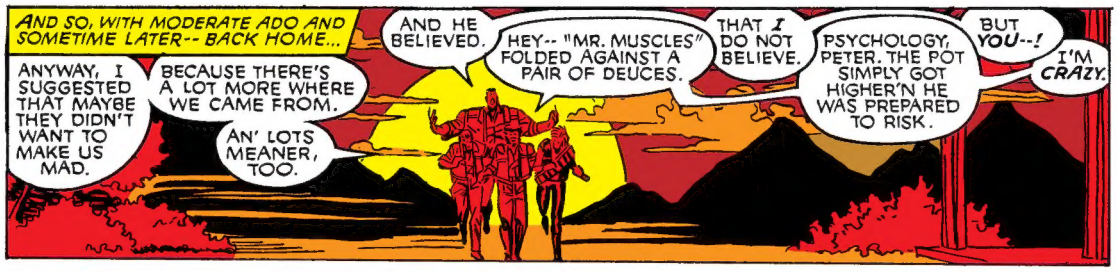

TOVARISCH...
...PERHAPS YOU SHOULD BORROW SOME OF LONGSHOT'S LUCK?
PERHAPS, RASPUTIN, YOU SHOULD SHUT UP.
THIS IS POKER.
GOT NOTHIN' TO DO WITH LUCK.
IT'S A GAME OF SKILL.

"AN' THAT SKILL IS PURE PSYCHOLOGY."
WITH THIS LAST CARD, I HAVE HIM!
I SHOW THREE KINGS, WITH A PAIR OF SIXES HIDDEN.
A FULL HOUSE-- AGAINST A PAIR OF TWOS.

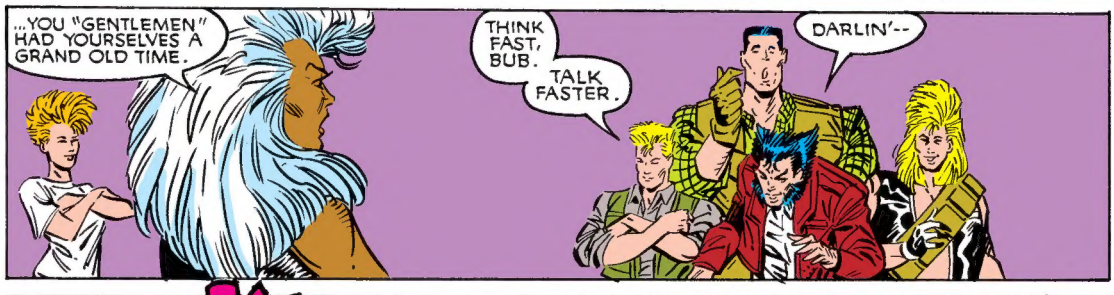
HOW 'BOUT WE MAKE THIS GAME REALLY INTERESTING?
I HAVE NO MORE MONEY.
I BET MY LIFE.
YOU WIN, YOU KILL ME.

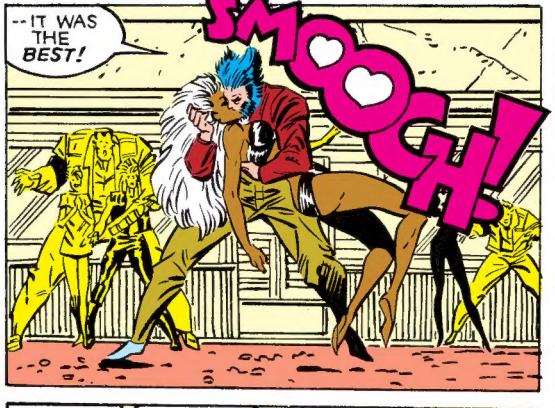

I WIN...
IS HE INSANE? SUICIDAL?? SUCH A BET WITH A PAIR OF TWOS?!?
BUT-- IS THAT ALL HE HAS? WHAT'S HIDDEN IN HIS HAND?
I SHOULD WIN-- BUT SUPPOSE I DON'T? HONOR DEMANDS I PAY IN FULL, I'LL BE DISGRACED IF I RENEGE.
I DON'T WANT TO DIE.
I'M THE LEADER OF MY PEOPLE, THEY NEED ME.
THERE'S NO SHAME IN AN HONORABLE RETREAT, IN THE FACE OF SUPERIOR FORCES. DISCRETION IS, AFTER ALL, THE BETTER PART OF VALOR.
BUT I DON'T WANT TO LOSE!
BET'S TO YOU, BUB.
PLAY OR FOLD.


YOU WILL LEARN TO YOUR ETERNAL HORROR...
...THE FOLLY OF CHALLENGING THE CONQUEST!
Burrp!
WHAT DID YOU SAY?
GAS. SORRY.
JEST WITH ME AT YOUR PERIL!
WE POSSESS WEAPONS OF SUCH TERRIBLE POWER...
...AS TO BEGGAR YOUR PATHETIC IMAGINATION.
DO TELL.
STRIKE FORCE COMMANDER-- FEARLESS LEADER IS LIFTING OFF THE COMMAND VESSEL!
HE MEANS TO DROP THE JEAN BOMB!
"JEAN...?"
Nnnah-- COULDN'T BE.
THAT-- TRAITOR!
HADES HORDE--
--BLAST THEM FROM THE SKY!
YOU FELLAS CALL THOSE BLASTERS?
THOSE AREN'T BLASTERS.
THIS IS A BLASTER.
SHZAM!
NOW--WHAT'S ALL THIS ABOUT A "CONQUEST?"

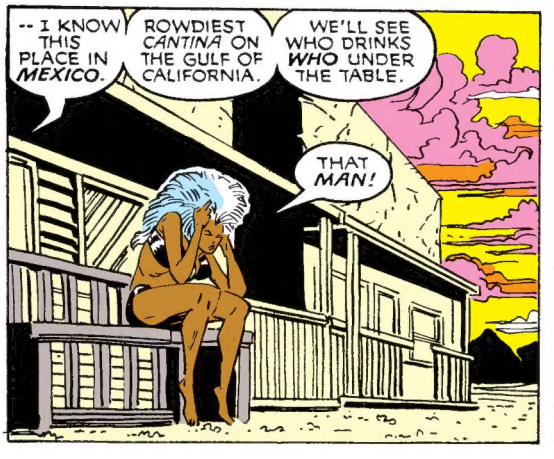

AND SO, WITH MODERATE ADO AND SOMETIME LATER-- BACK HOME...
ANYWAY, I SUGGESTED THAT MAYBE THEY DIDN'T WANT TO MAKE US MAD.
BECAUSE THERE'S A LOT MORE WHERE WE CAME FROM.
AN' LOTS MEANER, TOO.
AND HE BELIEVED.
HEY-- "MR. MUSCLES" FOLDED AGAINST A PAIR OF DEUCES.
THAT I DO NOT BELIEVE.
PSYCHOLOGY, PETER. THE POT SIMPLY GOT HIGHER'N HE WAS PREPARED TO RISK.
BUT YOU--!
I'M CRAZY.

Ah-HEM!
HI, BOSS! ROGUE! DAZZLER!
IT WOULD APPEAR...
Uh-oh!

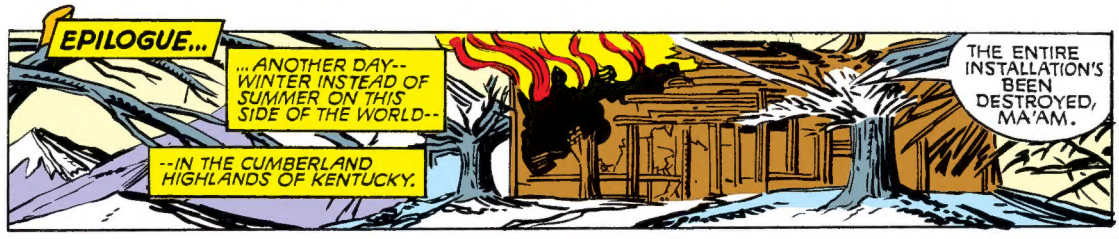

...YOU "GENTLEMEN" HAD YOURSELVES A GRAND OLD TIME.
THINK FAST, BUB.
TALK FASTER.
DARLIN'--

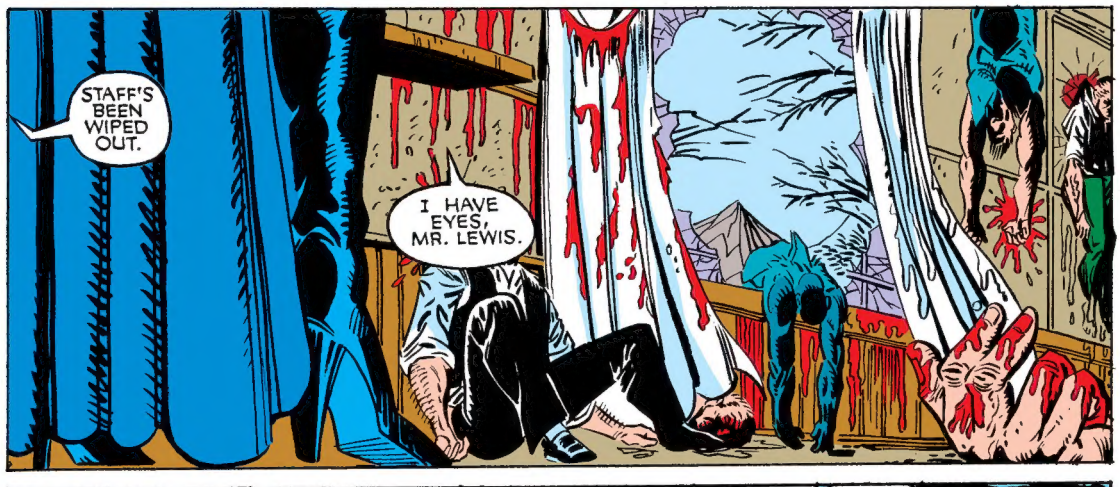

--IT WAS THE BEST!
SMOOCH!

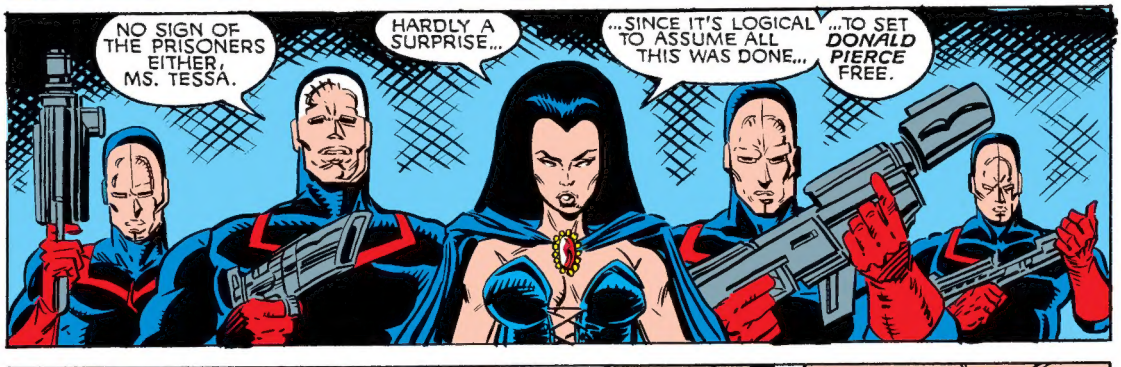
NICE!
YOU ARE CRAZY!
WORKS FOR ME, DARLIN'!
YO, ALEX--
--GOT A NOTION FOR A ROAD TRIP--

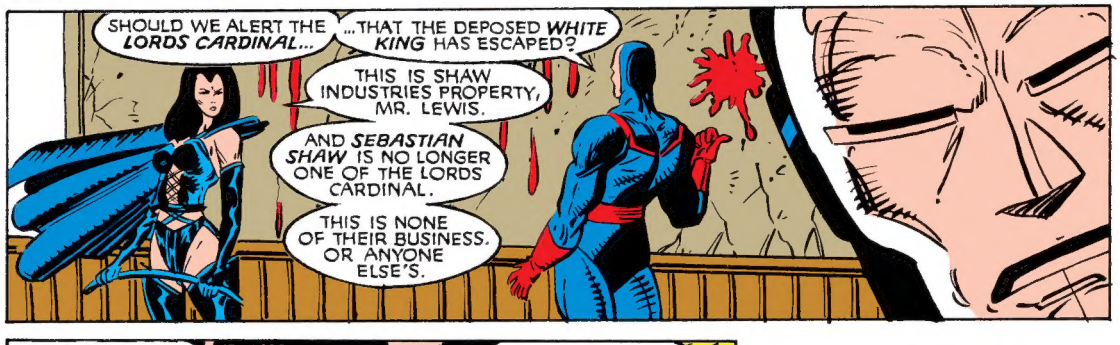

-- I KNOW THIS PLACE IN MEXICO.
ROWDIEST CANTINA ON THE GULF OF CALIFORNIA.
WE'LL SEE WHO DRINKS WHO UNDER THE TABLE.
THAT MAN!

HAHA HA HA
THOSE-- MEN!
HA HA HA HA









NEXT:

The DAY of OTHER LIGHTS

MINUTEMEN
Bluntman